

THIS MONTH: 437 SOUTHWESTERN BBSs

FEBRUARY 1995

BOARDWATCH[®]

MAGAZINE

Guide to Electronic Bulletin Boards and The Internet

NEWT GINGRICH

Putting His House
In Order • And Online
with the THOMAS
World Wide Web
Page

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multi-user environment. No other BBS platform gives you this power.

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GALACTICOMM



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Speed.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

ONE BBSCON - ONCE AGAIN SOFTLY

In 1991 Phil Becker, head of eSoft, and I were forced to deal with a rather gruesome situation. A group here in Denver had won the selection to put on a FidoNet Convention and it was going down in flames financially and organizationally. We were both based here in the Denver area and could not figure out how to avoid the inevitable tie-in with those "Denver People" who had crashed and burned on a FidoCon. Fidonet Conventions at that time were typically 90 people in a Howard Johnson's somewhere. So we more or less had to back the Denver group and try to turn the show into a success. It rather was, with about 350 people attending FidoCon 1991.

At that time we started talking about building a wider show serving the online community. Phil thought it would be a great success. I thought it would be a great deal of work. We were both approximately correct in our respective analyses. ONE BBSCON 1992 drew right at 1000 people to an August event in Denver. But the energy and enthusiasm of that group was pretty heady stuff. We did it again in Colorado Springs in August of 1993 and it doubled to 2000 attendees and if anything, it was more exciting yet. Last year, we held it in Atlanta for some 4000 online enthusiasts. It was more spread out, more confused, and there was just a whole lot more of it. But it retained an incredible excitement and energy, everyone there was really excited about bulletin boards, the Internet, and the related technologies of making a personal computer useful as a communications device rather than a calculating device. It was reminiscent of the early days of personal computers - before they became office equipment.

I went to Interop, also in Atlanta the next month, and was struck by a couple of relative comparisons. Interop is

devoted primarily to LAN networking - an uneasy marriage of Novell people and Unix people with an increasing component of Internet activity. It is considered BIG while ONE BBSCON is considered SMALL. There were indeed a lot of people at Interop. And the booth designs were very elegant and showing some very interesting technology. But the people in them looked bored, talked bored, and bored the hell out of me. And the attendees looked pretty wilted as well. Maybe I caught them on a bad day or something. But I did notice that the vendor exhibit function was almost separate from the

ONE BBSCON



AUGUST 16-20, 1995

educational sessions. And more to the point, all of Interop generated about 1200 attendees to their schedule of seminars. The heart of ONE BBSCON is of course the educational sessions - 173 of them in 1994. Since some 90% of our attendees are there for the full educational seminar set, I was stunned to realize we were already three times larger than Interop by this measure. And it could be that the fact that the vast majority of our attendees had paid the freight to attend the whole event was some component of the excitement and enthusiasm level. They weren't diluted by thousands of people who walked in at no charge to gaze at the vendor exhibits. If so, we'll continue to do our way.

From the beginning, we've operated under the view of the online community not as one single homogenous group, but a series of largely separate groups that don't communicate with each other very well, but do share a vested interest in data communication and primarily wide-area communications. That has necessarily led to the inclusion of bulletin board systems of every stripe, larger commercial online services such as Prodigy, Internet Service Providers, government BBS operators, enthusiasts from the educational community, and even representatives from telephone companies and cable tv companies. While these disparate groups DO share common ground, they also have some very different needs and issues as well. To try to see that each group takes home more than they bring, we set up an Executive Advisory Board of volunteers to represent different constituencies. We've varied the EAB a bit each year to trim it to reality, but it has been invaluable in providing us a view of how these various communities view the world. We recently announced our 1995 Executive Advisory Board:

Kevin Behrens
Aquila BBS

Kevin Behrens operates a 42 line commercial BBS in the Chicago area as a business and represents independent entrepreneurial bulletin boards.

Scott Brinker
Galacticomm, Inc.

Scott Brinker is the President of Galacticomm, Inc., developer of The Major BBS software.

John C. Dvorak
PC Magazine/PC Computing columnist

John C. Dvorak was a very early proponent of communications as the "fourth application" of personal computers and wrote one of the earliest successful books on the topic - Dvorak's Guide to PC Telecommunications. He also hosts

the Dvorak Awards for Telecommunications Excellence at ONE BBSCON each year.

Michael Greenbaum

Vice President Product Development
Bell Atlantic

Michael Greenbaum was previously General Manager of Communications for Prodigy Service Company, and recently moved to Bell Atlantic where he helps develop online data communications products for this regional bell operating company.

Jim Harrer

Mustang Software, Inc.

Jim Harrer founded Mustang Software, Inc., a major software developer of BBS software (Wildcat!) and communications software (QmodemPro for Windows).

Dennis Hayes

Hayes Microcomputer Products, Inc.

Mr. Hayes is the founder and president of Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc., and one of the pioneers of modem technology. He's also one of the charter sponsors of the Association of Online Professionals.

Stan Hirschman

Vice President of Operations
Software Etc.

Stan Hirschman is Vice President of Operations at Software Etc. and organizes their annual meetings of store managers. He also operates the Odyssey BBS in Edina Minnesota as a hobby bulletin board and is committed to bulletin board use as a hobby, representing the hobbyist point of view at ONE BBSCON.

Dave Hughes Sr.

Old Colorado City Communications

Dave Hughes has been an active proponent of low-cost grass roots communications for individuals and the educational community.

Steve Larson

Prodigy Services Company

Steve Larson manages the bulletin board areas on the Prodigy commercial online service, and works with some 60 independent contractor forum leaders who manage each of the topical BBS forums on the service. He also operates a hobby BBS from home.

Bob Metcalfe

InfoWorld columnist

Bob Metcalfe invented ethernet and founded 3COMM Corporation. He's very cognizant of the corporate view of wide area communications, Unix, the Internet, and related topics and writes a weekly column in InfoWorld.

David McClure

Association of Online Professionals

David McClure founded the Association of Online Professionals, a Washington D.C. based organization formed to represent system operators and lobby legislators on behalf of the online community.

Bill Washburn

MecklerWeb

Mr. Washburn was the past director of the Commercial Internet Exchange (CIX) and has an excellent knowledge of the needs of Internet Service Providers as well as communications issues in education.

Most of the 1995 Executive Advisory Board met for the first time at a three day retreat at the Lodge at Cordillera, a rather secluded getaway about 20 miles outside of Vail Colorado high in the Rocky Mountains. The group gathered for three days January 10th to the 13th to discuss the 1995 Online Networking Exposition and BBS Convention scheduled for August 16-20th in Tampa Florida, and generally participate in brainstorming/discussion of where bulletin boards, the Internet, and communications in general were headed in the coming year. Ok, ok, so they hung around the hot tub a bit, drank cognac, and went snowshoeing in the back country in the moonlight and did the high country bonfire trick a bit too. The point is, we all got away from the immediate urgencies of operating various businesses to pause and reflect on the future of this very exciting but rapidly changing industry.

When you get that many good minds in the same place, it's a bit of a heady experience. I'm not at this point certain what all that was discussed quite means - it covered a lot of ground and will take some time to digest. But I am confident we will get a very different, and better ONE BBSCON out of it than would otherwise have occurred. We're probably going to continue to eschew the large cattle trot type of show in favor of the smaller, more

intense educational event for another year. But the consensus of the group seemed to average around 7500 expected attendees at the 1995 event. Putting together the facilities and seminar schedule for that number of people has me a little quivery in the stomach in the face of the task. But as I recall, I felt the same way facing the first ONE BBSCON in 1992, so I gather this is a doable thing as well.



Attendance at ONE BBSCON 1995 will again be priced at \$325 with an early registration of \$175 for those who register by May 1, 1995. I would like to ask all who wish to make presentations as speakers at ONE BBSCON 1995 to submit written proposals by April 1, 1995. Contact info:

ONE, Inc.

4255 South Buckley Road, Suite 308
Aurora, CO 80013
(303)693-5253 voice
(303)693-5518 fax

In any event, we expect a bigger and better ONE BBSCON in 1995, and we do hope you'll join us there.

Jack Rickard

Editor Rotundus.



Letters to the Editor

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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OCT ISSUE IMHO RE: INSURANCE

Dear Mr. Rickard,

Your October Letters to the Editor ("In My Humble Opinion") was excellent!

As a neophyte to BBS life, it was a real joy to discover BOARDWATCH (and your keen sense of wit...I didn't know such candor existed in major media publications). I especially was impressed with your comments concerning insurance companies.

About 30 years ago, while serving in the USAF I signed up with United States Automobile Association (USAA) insurance company out of San Antonio, TX. At the time this was a rather small company with modest quarters and basically providing quality insurance at a reasonable price. Now they are a mega monster company with a building like the taj mahal selling every kind of insurance you can think of, plus investment brokerage, buyer's services, etc.

During this period, the more they grew...the less service they provided, and...the more expensive the insurance became. It was almost a certainty that everytime they renewed a policy...when I compared the old policy provisions with the new one's there would be a reduction in benefits or an obnoxious clause added. Finally they added a clause which was the final straw and I turned to other companies (not YET as bad). The clause in effect said before they would pay any claims, they could interrogate separately anyone living in your home or involved in the insurance claim and get your signatures on separate affidavits (and woe be unto you if your affidavits didn't match up!)

I could tell you other stories about their "service" when it came time to paying legitimate claims, but I'm sure (from the experiences you so eloquently described), you've experienced some of the same. What can we do? Between the Lawyers (also read politi-cians...because MOST are lawyers), the Bankers (once upon a time a repayment interest of over 12% above prime rate would be considered usury...but now the credit

card companies...read Bankers...all do it with impunity), the Doctors, and the Insurance megoliths, the consumer is getting squeezed from every angle (it's no wonder there's so much stress these days...we are at the mercy of too many giants who only think about us in terms of statistics and how they can get more from us).

However, Let me ask you an unrelated question — because you must receive "tons" of E-mail, I'd be curious in getting your opinion about attaching files to E-mail messages without first having the consent of the receiver.

For instance, if you'd received an attached.TXT file of 45K with this E-mail message what would have been your reaction? What if the message, without taking too much of your reading time, briefly described the contents of the file thus providing you opportunity to decide to download or ignore?

Obviously, if the message didn't get you excited you'd be unlikely to download the file. But...let's assume you do find the description interesting and you believe the file contains information you'd like to have...would you be pleased to know you have immediate access to this information (without having to E-mail a request to the sender and then waiting for the reply to get it)? Or...would you have less esteem for the sender because of the sudden appearance of the "unasked-for" attached file (even though this saved you the extra time and trouble required to request it)?

It isn't attached, but would you be interested in receiving the file 10MKTIPS.TXT which is a FREE comprehensive REPORT dedicated to helping the small business owner? I believe many of your readers could greatly benefit from the information contained in this file because the authors' mentor is likely the highest paid marketing consultant in America (this is NO exagger-ation)...his advice has helped many thousands to grow their businesses. The file (under various names) is now established on many business oriented BBS around the nation (including Compuserve and America OnLine...but not the NET as of

yet). After I uploaded the file to one BBS, the Sysops of that BBS E-mailed this comment to me via my Internet address, "I just finished reading your text on 10 marketing mistakes. It is interesting and well as enlightening. Have you ever done any work with bulletin board sysops?"

Thank you for taking the time to read and reply to this message. I'll be glad to E-mail you the file (and/or the file's name and information as to where it can be found and downloaded on Compuserve, AOL, etc.) for you and your readers if you think you might like to look it over.

Best wishes...Edward I. Green
President, TM&A Creative Marketing
Inc. E-mail: edgreen@cerfnet.com

PS. You do write GREAT commentary, and what you write makes a LOT of sense :-)

Dear Ed:

Insurance companies do seem to become a law unto themselves. The solution is of course not to buy from them. But whenever companies reach a certain "mega" size, they enlist the aid of the government to mandate business. In Colorado, it is illegal to drive without proof of insurance for example. Under Hillary, it would have been illegal to not have medical insurance. Strange times.

As to attached files, I really don't personally care much one way or another. We get a lot of mail, and a lot of it has attached files. Some we read. There is of course the fairly common point of view that every pixel has its price, and how dare you defile my inbox with worthless pixels I had to pay for. I don't share it myself. But one man's trash is another's treasure, and it's hard to predict. The next message I read may hold the key to my future. Or it might be something about Amway. Hard to tell ahead of time.

The Internet is having its effect though. It is very common to receive an e-mail message with a reference to an ftp or www site where the further information

can be easily obtained. Seems like a worthwhile custom.

Jack Rickard

Mr. Rickard,

One quick question, is there any chance you are going to be doing an article on the "Computer Genius youth of America"? I have always wanted to read about my competition. :-)

Thanks Again,
Mike Racanelli
miker@marist.marist.chi.il.us

Mike:

No chance.

A story on Computer Geriatric Gurus would be better. Life takes time. My personal goals for greatness:

By age 50: a great writer
By age 60: a great thinker
By age 70: a great grandfather
By age 80: a great lover
By age 90: a great loss to the community.

And I fear it will take all of that to get there.

I confess I was a young genius at one time myself, and I wouldn't worry about it too much if I were you. I got over it and am living a reasonably normal productive life - assisted by a loving family, and a variety of medications of course. You can too, if you just avoid focusing on the negatives and try to survive it one day at a time.

Jack Rickard

CIX

Jack,

Presumably you have seen today's announcement by the CIX board that they are going to start filtering on November 15 despite the vote of the membership directing them not to do that until at least March 15.

You may also have seen notices from Joseph Stroup and Karl Denninger of Net99 and MCSNet, respectively, announcing those organizations' immediate resignations from CIX.

It would appear that the predictions of the imminent collapse of CIX under the weight of its own arrogance is beginning, as present and now former CIX members scramble to establish their own peering agreements with God and everybody.

Just wondering what your general thoughts are on all this ...

EPOOLE@SCOOT.NETIS.COM

Eric:

Well, it's becoming rather yesterday's news and time to move on is my initial reaction. I find a membership organization devoid of any obligation to follow the dictates of its own membership comical in a pathetic sort of way. It was a bit frightening and potentially damaging to a network I view as a bit more fragile than the common perception seems to indicate.

Technically, I had essentially thought the filtering wouldn't matter initially, and would decline in importance rather rapidly over time. But I did think there would be SOME impact somewhere. If there has been, nobody is talking about it.

And there is a feeling of deja vu all over again. The death of Fidonet was so imminent so many times they even quit covering it in Fidonet NEWS unless it was really, really, REALLY the imminent death of Fidonet - and even then it never was.

I think I had it about right in the first editorial we did on CIX last September. The CIX board basically held a gun to their own head and made a bold statement "Send money or we blow our brains out." Apparently, Eric, not enough people sent money.

There were actually some important concepts in all of this. But after watching the CIX soap opera through, I can't remember what they were. I don't think we'll hear much about them in the future. I could be wrong...

Jack Rickard

HURRY UP AND WAIT

Hi Jack:

In response to those readers experiencing delays in receiving V.FC modems through prepaid orders, this situation is not limited to one manufacturer.

I prepaid an order through U.S. Robotics SYSOP program for a Courier V.EVERYTHING (now V.34) modem on July 26 this year. On November 2, I confirmed my order yet again. Every confirmation says I should receive the modem "in four weeks", so U.S. Robotics is saying, regardless of the original 6-8 week delay, that it will have taken four to five months, after payment, to receive

the modem. It could grow to be even longer.

It seems that U.S. Robotics, who once owned the sysop market, is delaying shipping those modems in favor of getting the product into reseller channels. Whatever the reason, modem manufacturers need to stop making promises that they have no intent on keeping.

Meanwhile, with hundreds of dollars still in the hands of U.S. Robotics, and no modem, I am beginning to feel that I would have done better by choosing to wait for ISDN. :-)

- Donald Jackson
DONALD.JACKSON@PSYBERDYNE.COM

Dear Donald:

I had a conversation with Adam Strack of U.S. Robotics in August at ONE BBSCON. He's actually the man in charge of their sysop program. He asked what the problem was within the community in their view of U.S. Robotics and I shared some of this with him at the time.

You may rest easier tonight knowing that he assured me none of that was true. There simply isn't a problem Donald.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I am writing this letter to you as I pull out the dagger you thrust deep into my heart in your November 1994 issue. Your comments regarding small Internet Service Providers make it sound as though we are faceless heathen without a clue and with only malice in our hearts. I am a GREAT fan of yours and so thoroughly enjoy your wisdom but would like to plead my case.

I am a physician with a busy Ob/Gyn practice in Victoria, Texas, a town of about 70,000 people equidistant between Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi. My passion has always been education and communication (which is so very important to the quality practice of medicine) and I have, for nearly a decade now, been involved in telecommunications. I, in a most fervent way, believe that telecommunications is the most powerful tool for communicating and educating that has appeared in my lifetime. To that end I ran one of the first 9600 baud BBS's in the country - The ST Medical Center.

It was run on a poor, old 520 ST from Atari with a US Robotics HST modem in

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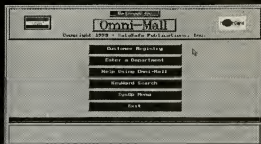


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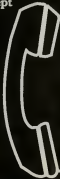
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Marquette, Michigan (while I was "serving time" in the Air Force). After a stint in St. Louis, I separated and moved to Victoria and went into private practice.

Here in Victoria I spend a great deal of time with patient and community education. I volunteer lecture at the local college, write a weekly column in the local paper about medical issues, and am a delegate to the Texas Medical Association. My fervor for telecommunications reared its annoying head in January of this year. I talked my partners into investing in a high-quality (read "expensive") multi-line BBS system dedicated to medical education between physicians and for the lay public (Medicine Chest BBS). I so abhor the garbage that is tossed to the public that passes for "medical information" by the popular press.

The evolution continued as I attempted to get Internet connectivity for my BBS to further the scope of my efforts. To my surprise there were NO providers in this area of the country! As I looked even deeper into it, the providers were sparse at best in San Antonio and El Paso and mediocre in their customer support in Houston. Seeing a true need in this area of Texas, I parlayed the strength of my medical group practice into a solid investment to bring to life my little new company: Internet Connect Services, Inc.

Unlike so many other providers we see the true need for quality education and customer support. To that end we have enlisted the help of my brother, Patrick Suarez, author of the well-received tutorial "The Beginner's Guide to the Internet", to create a lecture series that we provide FOR FREE to the community. I could continue to detail the things that ICS has done but I don't want to turn this into an advertisement.

The gist of this letter is that I am one of those small ISPs that you appear to scorn in your writing. I, and all of the people that work with me, are very good people that work very hard to provide not only a quality product but also the translation of all that Unix, Internet gobbledegook into understandable English for the common person to enjoy the powers of the Internet. We are not out to squash the BBS community; we arose from that technology and community. We are working with a huge BBS in Corpus Christi to provide their users with quality Internet connections right now, and would gladly work with any BBS that desires the same.

Mr. Cochrane may have run into a "bad apple" or he simply misunderstands

the simple bottom line of running a business (that is if you expect it to be around for very long). "Power monger control and the almighty dollar" is pretty harsh if you are describing hard-working people desperately trying to make a company stable and viable. I can tell you that providing only UUCP connections to BBSs is difficult if not virtually impossible for any but the HUGE service providers that make their money elsewhere. It is absolutely NOT fiscally feasible for us to concentrate such a huge effort and resource on a service that generates such a minute amount of revenue. Want a dedicated line and full connectivity? Step right up. Want UUCP service for next to nothing? Go away.

If your prediction that there will be "approximately TWO Internet providers in the future" comes true then some very sad things will happen:

First, the person desperate for locally owned, familiar businesses that care about them will be SOL. Have fun dealing with the faceless corporate monster if you wish for connectivity. I hardly think that they will send techs out to your homes to help out. I doubt if they will, FOR FREE, sit in the local mall offering tutorials and computer configuration sessions for their customers like we do. I doubt if they will gather at the local community college for professionally-produced seminars given to the public FOR FREE as a community service. I doubt if their care level for their customers is even a fraction of ours.

Second, scores of honest, hard-working, highly devoted and educated people like me will be financially devastated because our faith in the potential for a small business to succeed in America was ruined by a profound move towards a socialistic society. If anyone (Mr. Cochrane included) thinks you can start up a viable Internet provider company for less than nearly a half a million dollars, they certainly have some giant surprises in store for them. The 10-million Internet wannabees you identify had better pray that the "little guys" like me survive and flourish.

In closing, please keep in mind that we have faces and are real and, by in large, good people trying to make a business successful. Additionally, some of us go quite a bit farther in our support of our customers and our willingness to offer hands-on help. Supporting your regional ISP would certainly more firmly entrench capitalism and strike a blow, albeit a slight one, to the ever-nearing monster of socialism that is darkening our land.

Oh, yea! I agree with you: I think ALL providers should be FREENETS! Yea, great idea. Let's build an enormously expensive service and then GIVE it away. Neat. Each company could be in business for about six months and then let some other group of investors throw their money away in the next round! How utterly STUPID. I am forever amazed at how offended people get at the concept of paying for services that they get. Ah, socialism again... Everything for free, work for nothing... Just let the few of us fools pull the wagon for all the lazy slobs who want free rides. Sorry for the cynicism. I remain your faithful fan.

Most sincerely,

Philip Suarez, M.D.
President - Internet Connect Services, Inc. philip@icsl.net

...

Dr. Suarez;

First, the comment I made that all providers should be FREENETS was very tongue in cheek. Nothing comes from nothing.

I found your letter very illuminating. And your situation matches very closely that of Rocky Mountain Internet - who we get most of our connectivity from. They too simply wanted connectivity for their BBS, and had a difficult time getting it from Colorado Supernet - so now they compete with them. They weren't even trying to get into the Internet services game, they were forced to it to get connectivity themselves.

Tom Jennings, the original author of Fido BBS, ran into a similar thing out in San Francisco. They were really looking to extend toarnet style Internet connectivity on the cheap and ran into some horrifying situations with Rick Adams and UUNET, BARRnet and others who were seeking to control the game. So they wound up with an Internet Services Company.

I have two points here - one is that you've risen to confess in your own defense, and I don't think you were near the scene of the crime. And you mistake us broadly in assuming we advocate free services.

But the real point is the mistake made in seeking to avoid competition with their customer base. There was a very real attempt at a good old boys club based on these very dubious no-resale contract clauses by small Internet Service Providers. Small is BARRnet, NEARnet, CERFnet, UUNET, PSI, and Colorado Supernet - as opposed to SprintLink, the new internetMCI, etc. You would qualify as nearly invisible.

And predictably, it had the opposite effect of driving those who would be customers into being the competition they feared - they had to do it to get connectivity. And it derives not from a poor business decision, but a basic misunderstanding of what connectivity is, how to sell it, and how to build structure to service it. In your case, there may simply have been no service in the area, but many like you are there, because they were shut out of the club.

As to your specific points, I would urge you to likewise take a closer look at what you are doing. A certain percentage of UUCP connections graduate to SLIP connections. A certain percentage of SLIP connections graduate to leased lines. A certain percentage of leased lines graduate to T1 connections. Everyone in this game is evolving rapidly. You started wanting a BBS and are an ISP. If you don't build such an infrastructure of other services beneath you, I promise you you will NOT be able to handle the tsunami headed your way. And it's not entirely the "kind of problem to have" that you imagine. Not every customer is a goldmine, the 80/20 rule still applies. The problem is it is very difficult to predict who among your customers is going to make up the 20% that count a year from now. It is not an advocacy of socialism. It is an advocacy of survival. And the current mindset among much of the ISP community leaves a hole even Sprint or MCI could somehow manage to wedge a trailer truck in through sideways.

But again, I did find your letter very informative, and wish you the best with your venture.

Jack Rickard

LETTER FROM WALTER FINDLATOR

Jack,

Mr. Findlator writes:

>>We are surprised that none of the commercial online services has contacted any of the sysops of these boards for help.<<

If Mr. Findlator merely attempted to use the FIND command of CompuServe, and used the keyword "Black" he would've found what he is looking for.

From perusing the forums, I fear that relations have a long way to go. But at least the opportunity for dialog is there and open to people of all races to participate. Which is what Cyberspace is all about.

Mitch Allen (A straight white male, for those keeping score.)

76040.2757@compuserve.com

Mitch:

I don't think that's what Mr. Findlator was looking for. He pointed a rather accusing finger across about 180 degrees of horizon without actually looking at any of it - the heart of my response. I would rather guess he was seeking to promote Afro-Span, a not altogether unworthy objective, but clumsily done.

Straight white male? I had heard the last one of you guys died in a charter fishing accident off the coast of Florida nearly three years ago. Are there others?

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack—

Among the things I enjoy most in your magazine are your opinionated tirades in the editor's column and letters section. Keep it up!

On the other hand, from time to time you go so far overboard that someone needs to tug on your coat tail and ask you to settle down a little. A case in point was your response to a letter from Walter Findlator in the November '94 issues.

It seems to me that in making a case for culturally-specific BBS's and conferences, Mr. Findlator was promoting cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity rather than trying to "bring racial conflict into the online arena." The tone and content of his letter was generally open, thoughtful and non-exclusionary. (By the way, his resentment of Perot's "you people" comment while simultaneously calling for a discrete group identity is perfectly understandable. You might not understand or agree with it, but you can't deny the fact that MANY minority people took similar umbrage at the phrase, and he was simply reflecting this fact. You might find it interesting to learn why this is.)

Mr. Findlator did badly overstate himself by saying that "People of certain heritages will only listen to or watch those things that are of them, by them and for them." As you point out, this is clearly not the case. And for most BBS's and forums, the physical or cultural attributes of participants is totally irrelevant. I agree with you entirely that one of the wonderful things about electronic communication is that these factors simply don't exist. I could be Jesse Helms or Jesse Jackson, but in the online world no one would have to know. Isn't that great?

You do seem to acknowledge, though, that if the topic is specifically cultural, the background of the participants would have some bearing. Well, the conference topics Mr. Findlator cites (Black women, Racism, holidays, etc.) seem to have a cultural basis and be of particular interest to folks sharing a particular identity. Nothing wrong with that. In television land, it's nice to know that I can tune in something like Tony Brown's Journal if I want a perspective on current events that's sensitive to a Black point of view. Or that I can look for Pat Buchanan, Rush Limbaugh, or Dan Rather to give me another way to look at things. There are BBS's for women, gays, alcoholics—even recovering SYSOPs—and they all have their place. (Although some do it better than others.) Why not have a BBS or two (or twenty) for people of color, where they can air their views and differences and let other, more mainstream folk log on and learn—and be learned from in return?

Anyway, my point with all this is to say I think you read some goofy race-hate stuff into a pretty benign letter that made some sense to me, at least.

Take your own advice, Jack. Lighten up.

Gene Brown
Ann Arbor, MI
gene.brown@HAL9K.com

Gene:

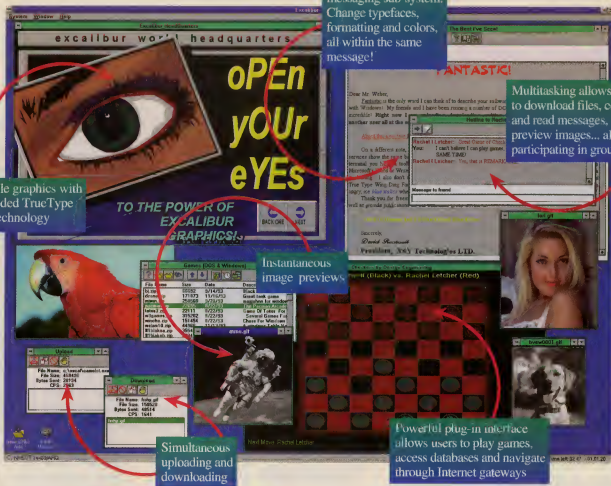
I don't disagree with your sentiments about special topic systems. I just don't think we read the same letter.

Jack Rickard

Mr. Findlator:

I read your comments in the November issue of Boardwatch regarding the "...many of the Big Boys...issue that seems to be a sore spot to these services..." Cultural bbs or African/Latin bbs" with some concern. I have to agree with the editorial response regarding the "racial conflict." And I must say that without a graphic or some sort to identify the editor I would not know nor care about his color, origin, etc.

BBS lists are abundant and prolific world wide. I touch as many as I can if for nothing more than a sample. Not unlike a sales presentation is a BBS' initial appearance. If you show me what I want in the first 3 min I am likely to stay and listen. At this point I feel I have received a poor sales presentation. Your comments do not leave me with a smooth feeling and wanting to know



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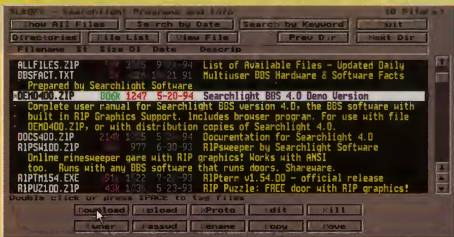
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Our RIP file manager lets you scroll anywhere in a directory...you can tag items and run commands by clicking with the mouse

When the first Bulletin Board Systems went online in 1978, graphical user interfaces didn't exist. Callers had to stare at text menus and memorize commands; there was no alternative.

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Searchlight 4.0 creates RIP menus on the fly, so you can build custom menus in seconds. And *Searchlight 4.0* is the only BBS program that displays RIP locally—so you see the same screens your callers do.

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July, 1994



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The automatic menu generation in Searchlight 4.0 lets you turn any RIP screen into a custom menu

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**PC Magazine
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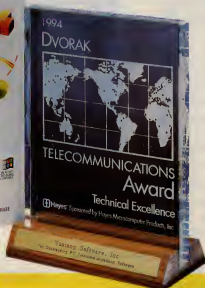
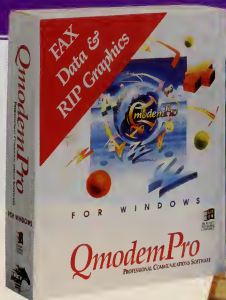
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BOA

more. Your 'hook' seems more like a spike.

It is up to those wanting their products and issues promoted to do so in the best initial and subsequent markets. To cry "what about me" is of a spoiled child.

No user is "forced" to dial the porn boards but they have a hook for a market. I do not agree, personally, that BBS' or other publicly open communication pathways are being put to a good use in this subject area. For example; HUSTLER is not upset if their online product does not appeal to you. I'm sure VIRTUAL FANTASIES isn't hurting for lack of your call or those users you may influence...

There are specialty boards all over the world promoting their issues and beliefs; do you want to know how to build a bomb or buy weapons...you can find it on a BBS. I pick a number from a list or an advertisement which hooks my interest and not one promoting racism or discrimination. I am not interested where others might.

It is time to inform me and not aggravate me. Educate me and not intimidate me. I don't care what your color or ethnic background might be. Take a couple of steps back and look at what the point of your service is about. If is racist then you will attract those individuals. If you present a forum of information and education then I may be interested. The "letter" looked much like an advertisement, too. Perhaps you should buy advertisement space using your last six paragraphs and resubmit your first paragraph as a real comment.

By the way, do you have any idea what my race or ethnic background is...should you care? Interest me in your product.

Scott Hagedorn
hagedos1@westatpo.westat.com

Jack:

I read Mr. Findlator's letter regarding Afro-Span Network, and came to the same conclusions you did. I have seen one person online who was a rampant racism finder, seeing racism in any who dared post an opinion disagreeing with his. This individual soon found the "twit list" in my OLN reader. I have pity for those who cannot be an individual person before having to lump in with some group, especially online. Everybody types the same color.

Something I thought about while reading the African/Latin BBS letter was how segregationist this was, and what the attitudes would be among

Blacks and Hispanics if this letter dealt with a Caucasian BBS. I have heard Black groups who exist to divide people by race referred to as "The Klan with a tan" and this makes fairly good sense to me. I have no respect for anyone of any race who sees fit to call for dividing people by race.

My race? I am a human.

Tim Wisner
tim.wisner@ckcs.uucp

Tim:

I'm not sure I came to a conclusion, but did ask some questions along those lines. I see nothing particularly wrong with special topic services, and topics of interest to specific races similarly. I've been aware of bulletin boards catering specifically to the black community for a number of years so the "need" was a little confusing. I've been on casual terms with a woman running a BBS out of her home in New Jersey for nearly five years and followed her progress for awhile. She was one of the very earliest participants in our USATODAY news distribution program, and the board was specifically for black issues.

But yes, the letter did seem needlessly divisive, and I was a little unclear as to the purpose beyond drawing attention to itself.

I don't do groups well, and don't understand them well either. So I may be a little out of my league here. Or Mr. Findlator may just be a little late to the party, and rushing in where Angels fear to tread.

Jack Rickard

Dear Mr Rickard...

I kept telling myself I shouldn't write this, but it appears that I've lost the argument.

You COMPLETELY missed the boat on the letter in the November issue from Walter Findlator of the Afro Span Network. I'm not surprised. If given the chance I could have predicted your reaction and warned Mr Findlator. You and Rush Limboob are quite predictable in such matters.

Mr Findlator's ideas of announcing and promoting African American and Latin American BBS's are NOT the national crisis of "race-hate" that you depict. Thinking and worse, printing, such a claim tells more about you than I ever wanted to know.

If you'll think for a minute, if one wants to discuss motorcycles would one do such in the alt.fan.letterman newsgroup? If one is looking for information on C programming does one seek advice in a cooking echo? Probably not. Likewise, if one is seeking to research one's enslaved African ancestors, or discuss the Congressional Black Caucus' take on Haiti, most likely one would go where similar minds can meet, discuss and/or debate such topics.

I know it may be astounding to you, but Latin and African Americans have as many unique interests as they do common interests with the majority. Latin and African American BBS's are addressing some of those unique interests while attempting to cover the common interests as well. My genealogy oriented BBS carries most of the echoes from AfroNet, while at the same time carrying soc.roots, Fido's European Genealogy echo and more. If a Latin or African American is interested in getting the latest on OS/2 they can be sure to find it in the comp.os.os2 newsgroups. Likewise, if they want advice on researching their pre-emancipation ancestors they can look for it in our African American genealogy echo. That's not "race-hate based" (Geez! I can't believe you wrote that!), that's simply common sense.

C'mon Jack.... you can do better than that! Take your own advice and "lighten up". Believe it or not EVEN you can learn something new.

Mike Wade
mike.wade@upeople.com
U-People BBS
419-589-2310

Mike:

Actually, I love to learn new things, and it's true more boats have sailed without me than with me onboard. I prefer to think of myself as "consistent" rather than "predictable" but they may be interchangeable in this case.

I do confess to being a little lost on Mr. Findlator's missive. It seemed very angry, and I was a little clueless as to about what. If the issue IS indeed special topic boards, I've championed them rather tirelessly and over the course of a number of years. And no, I do not find it astounding that there are topics of specific interest to African Americans. To tell you the truth, I'm a little fascinated by the hair thing myself right now and a product titled RIO - quite another story though I guess and not on par with enslaved African ancestors - but chemical free.

Yes, that thinking and printing causes no end of problems. I'm sure Mr. Limboob struggles with it too.

U-People.

Jack Rickard

...

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Hi Jack!

Dvorak's column re: computers and social responsibility, wherein he laments short-sightedness of us computer professionals for not defending the jobs of the poor souls in fast food joints doomed to phaseout because of spittle-free burgers pumped out by multitasking auto-cooks.

Hey, change creates dislocation. Thank goodness! Otherwise, millions of people would continue doggedly on forever. As you have pointed out, Life ain't fair. But why should the people who use computers, and thereby change the course of everybody's life, be held responsible for the consequences of people who don't adjust to the change? Let the slackards get the hell out of the way. The rest of us are moving onward.

My grandmother told me about the impact of the automobile. Thousands of pathetic entry level jobs once afforded by city livery businesses disappeared forever once transportation was mechanized. As a result, we now have millions of shovel-illiterate citizens, who cleverly, and on their own, find entry-level jobs as pump jockies.

My only concern with the final automation of fast food is that schools will have to pick up the slack in teaching American youth to add. Clearly the education system is not yet up to meeting that challenge. Go into any fast food establishment and watch any cashier-in-training.

Sorry to bother you with this letter, Jack, but Dvorak's mail address seems to be missing. My question to him is "Where were you when the vending machine explosion put all those candy stores out of business?"

DAVID.SINGER@HOUSENET.COM

...

Dear David;

Yeah, how about that guy? And have you tried any of those recipes?

Seriously, I'm in your camp on this one. I love to eat out of machines whenever possible. Do you want MY prediction? Techno-backlash in the period 1997-2002. Big resurgence in art, classical

music, poetry, literature, anything done by hand by individuals. Big market for one of a kinds. If it looks computer generated, it will be viewed as lower class. And we'll be lining up to get hamburgers from a fat guy named Phil who wipes his hands on his apron a lot at \$12 a burger.

Jack Rickard

...

EASE OF USE

Happily rotund one:

Am developing an online app. that requires an interface for 55 year old moms-that-can't-adjust-the-volume-on-their-TV. IE, is there anything out there that runs under windows and is truly point and click?

Also, am wondering if there is a definitive text on BBS administration. Security, liability, collections, etc...all of this stuff seems relatively documentable but said document is heretofor undiscovered.

If you've gotta moment,
Michael.Collette@support.com.

Thanks,

MC

...

Michael:

Yes, there is in fact. Mosaic. I'm a big fan of NetScape's version right now. My sister recently joined the Boardwatch force and hasn't been online much recently. I watched Gary Funk, resident wizard of things with cooling fans, walk her through the part where she logged onto our bulletin board so she could e-mail a friend in St. Louis. It was gruesome. "Just answer the questions on the screen," he said. "What's an IBM COMPAT?" she asked.

Later the same day, she sat down at Jeff Rouyer's machine in the art department. Jeff has been working with HTML to make a www.boardwatch.com make sense in places. She bumped the mouse and the screen moved. So she bumped it again. I went for coffee and when I got back she was in Nairobi someplace viewing pictures of naked natives online. After clicking across Europe for an hour she asked how to get "off" the system. When I explained to her she wasn't really on one but viewing documents transferred to Jeff's machine, and her next official act could be to safely walk away, we all sort of got it. It's WWW and Mosaic browsers for Windows. However feeble it may be in some ways technically, it won.

Definitive text? Likely not. But our own Lance Rose has a book out titled SYSLAW - A Legal Guide for System Operators. And Alan Bryant has done rather well with a book from Addison Wesley titled Creating Successful Bulletin Board Systems. You might find either or both useful.

Jack Rickard

...

SPANISH LANGUAGE BBSS

Hi Jack,

Love your magazine and the way you infuse each letter to the editor response with your personal touch.

Could you tell me how I can find a list of Spanish language BBS's in the USA.

Many Thanks,

Melody Winnig
MelodyWin@aol.com

...

Dear Melody:

I'll tell you how I would do it. Back up about three letters to the U-People BBS number. Call there and browse the AfroSpan message areas looking for the Latin topics. Copy down one of the BBS numbers listed at the bottom of the messages. Get three while you are there. Dial them direct. One of them will have a list in one of the file directories or perhaps in the bulletins area.

I've been doing this too long.

Jack Rickard

...

SYSP GROUP?

Dear Jack,

Your comment to Robert Parsons about common traits among BBS operators reminded me of a conversation I had with a friend after returning from the 1993 ONE BBS con. I told him I hadn't heard anyone say they were Liberal, Conservative, Democrat or Republican, but quite a few said they "tended to be Libertarian." He asked "Did they all use the term 'tend to be'?" I answered "Yes, every one of them," and suddenly realized why attempts to form sysop organizations keep failing. Sysops don't like to join groups, even when it would be to our advantage. We're just not wired that way. We're so damn Libertarian we won't even admit to being Libertarian. At least, we tend to be.

Regards,

Dave Hitt
dave.hitt@electric-ave.com

...

Dave:

An interesting, and I think accurate characterization. I think at this point most of us agree there should be an online service operators organization, and we hope it has a lot of members and becomes powerful and does well. None of us want to actually join personally, but it's a great idea.

But seriously, any group that would have us as a member...

Jack Richard

SATIRE FOR SYSOPS

Dear Jack,

For a week now I have been waiting with bated breath for the arrival of my new 8 Line Digiboard. Don't let my wife hear this but, I am not sure if I was filled with this much anticipation at the arrival of my first child. Anyway, the good folks at Excalibur who sold me the board sent it by Federal Express and it absolutely got here this morning. I was so excited I could hardly sign my name for the delivery guy. I took the box into my home office and reverently removed the 1/2 mile of packing tape (yes, people hate the way I open my Christmas presents too). As the lid popped open I was instantly attacked by millions of statically charged Styrofoam peanuts, the inventor of which is going to die when I find him or her. After digging through all the mess I found THE BOX, black with white letters, green stripes, you know the one. I carefully removed more tape and pulled out the goodies.

I had just laid out all the pieces in front of me on my desk, when in walks my wife. "What's this thing?" she asks. I hesitate for a second as I contemplate how to describe the raptures of multiport IO to a woman I love dearly (and wish to remain with) without making her feel like some inferior life form. "Well Dear, it's sort of a multiple male/female thing, this one plugs in here and that one plugs in there and it's called an octopus." "I see," she says looking at me rather suspiciously. "Octopuses?? Male/female thing... hmm! Well, I'm going for lunch."

See you later alligator."

By this time I've got the manual out of the handy Ziploc bag and am drinking in every word the folks from Flying Cloud Drive in Eden Prairie, MN have to say in both English and German. I groan when I read that this device complies with the FCC restrictions and that I won't be able to interfere with my neighbors TV reception. I also learn that these guys in MN have a BBS and

Internet support so I can get the latest driver and an old fashioned telephone number with real live support staff at the other end (a small twinge of nervousness goes through me). And then I hit THE PAGE!

"Installation Tips" My adrenaline rises another notch. "This is it" I say. Then to my horror I read the following words, "Installing your PC/Xe or MC/Xe boards is easy; however, since the boards require unique I/O and memory addresses, you may experience conflicts with other devices in your system..."

EASY?!! EASY?!! Who asked for easy? I don't want this to be easy! I want this to be difficult, real difficult! I want everyone to think this is the most difficult thing in the world to set up and run. I want them to believe I'm a rocket scientist for ever figuring this stuff out. Give me HARD any day. I love those manuals from Taiwan that are written in bad English! I love those manuals that replace all the critical information with a page that says "This page intentionally left blank."

"Please! Please! Please don't make this EASY!!

I began to frantically page through the manual and finally let out a sigh of relief. I wasn't totally let down. The instructions for putting the card in the machine were hidden well after running the diagnostics program and messing with boot disks, config.sys and autoexec.bat etc. All of which wouldn't help at all if the card was not already in the machine, which any true techie would have known.

So with my faith somewhat restored, I plunged in. At some point, while I was lost in memory addressing space, my wife returned to ask me if "I had that octopusy thing hooked up yet? I hardly noticed her, I was too busy floating on a flying cloud somewhere between 0C0000h and 0EFFFFh delighting in the fact that the factory default settings wouldn't possibly work on my "loaded to the hilt" system. After all, any board that works right out of the box should be sent back to the manufacturer DOA (Dead On Arrival) just because, any board that works right out of the box can't possibly be trustworthy. Plug and play is for those wimpy Mac guys, not us rocket scientists, right?!!

Whommp!! (sound of forehead hitting desk) Where's the Tylenol??"

As a new subscriber I want to thank you for an excellent magazine Jack. It's a great help to some of us that joined the sysop crowd rather recently.

Ken Galpin
kgalpin@wimsy.com

Ken:

Yeah, I love it when that happens. No pain, no gain. If it was simple, everybody would run a BBS, and then where would we be...

Jack Richard

Jack,

THANKS A MILLION

Thanks a million for publishing such a wonderful magazine for us Sysop's. I truly appreciate the confidentiality I've received from Brian Gallagher and just knowing that you guys are there to keep all Sysop's informed is an inspiration.

I truly was losing my mind (at least thought I was) when my BBS was seized. The only place I had to go to (where I could trust) was BW. I wish all reporters/journalists were as trustworthy as you all are.

Again, from all of us Louisville Sysop's - Thanks a million!

Carolina
From: CAROLINA@IGLOU.COM

Carolina:

We kept something confidential? Seized? Brian? BRIAN! B-R-I-A-N!!!

Jack Richard

STRUGGLING SYSOP

I have only received (2) issues of your publication and already I feel I made a correct choice. I could not sleep when I received the last issue on November 3rd until I read your entire letters to the editor section. "You still have a Hummer!"

Questions though: I have not had any problem finding info on board software and computer products and parts are always available. I also have had no problem with the new idea of digiboards and connections, yet I get totally lost when reading about phone lines and the "internet" and I would gather "the more advanced issues of starting a bbs. Where can I get the remainder of the help I need to get this thing online? I hope I am not being to vague but it seems that about the time I get one concept in my head another such as "credit cards" or "the bank that will process on line checks" or types of telephone lines etc. continue to complicated matters. I may be making to much out of it but I want to start right and on budget then grow from there. Any and

all assistance would be greatly excepted and appreciated.

It is very refreshing to read a magazine that in my personal opinion has not conformed to the norm and is willing to talk out when the need arises - and these days the need is always rising. I appreciate your efforts - They're not in vain.

Thank you for the assistance

Kevin M. Shelene

Kevin:

Very pleased we're hitting the mark. As to the more "advanced" issues such as phone lines and Internet, it can be a bit difficult. But understand that one of the entrancing things about bulletin boards and online services is they're not done yet. Once it is "plug and play" most of the play goes out of it. The Internet connection certainly is very much in development. Basically, the Internet is a belief system linking computers throughout the land. They beat the telephone company out of long distance charges that way using badly written software and that would have been finished but the guy graduated and hasn't been around.

Seriously, the big topic in Boardwatch has been "connecting your BBS to the Internet" for several years. The notable thing is that with an Internet connection one very expensive telephone line allows you to have multiple connections to your system and they don't have to pay long distance charges to get there. With telephone lines, you have to have one line and one modem connected to your BBS for each person that will be on the system simultaneously. That's a basic take on it, but more or less accurate.

Jack Richard

COFFEEHOUSE INTERNET ACCESS

Jack

I am a subscriber to your magazine, and BBS. Although I think my BBS subscription expired without much use.

I am looking for a coin operated mechanism to operate a Macintosh for limited amounts of time. Such a gadget was being used in coffeehouses in San Francisco for email access to the internet.

I remember reading an article, but cannot find it. I telnetted to your bbs, but could not get the magazine archive menu option to acknowledge my request. I wanted to search all back Boardwatch

articles, to see if that was were I had read the article.

I am interested in helping a coffeehouse here in Houston Texas get on the net, and need some kind of way to limit patrons time at the computer.

Do I have to be current in my BBS subscription to access the on-line search?

Any suggestions?

Thank you for your time (and the nice magazine).

mark

p.s. I think that your current issue is being a little too pessimistic about the fate of local internet access providers. While many aspects are being commoditized, and the BBS's will indeed play host to a large number of people, there will remain a niche for companies offering superior service and knowledge about the resources available on the internet. Many businesses and knowledge workers will be willing to pay a premium for high quality service, and there are more than a few IP access providers that are offering that type of service. Think of them as BBS's running on a Unix box if you'd like.

mark david mcCreary
mcCreary@scsai.com

Mark:

Wayne Gregori operates SFNet in the San Francisco area with coffee houses, and now I think laundromats - with little coin operated terminals he builds himself with coin boxes, software, and the works. He was selling them at one point. You can contact him at wayne.gregori@sfnet.com.

The coin mechanisms themselves are produced by Coin Controls International, 1850 Howard Street, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007; (708)228-1810 voice; (708)228-1833 fax.

As to the pessimism, you may be right. I guess time will tell, won't it? Superior service and knowledge? Oh, that's always in demand. Of course, I hear those words from people who haven't answered the telephone in nine days, but it's possible. High quality service? You betcha. We're looking for it. I think of them as BBS's NOT running on a UNIX box. And we wish they WERE running, on anything...

Jack Richard

VBBS NIGHTMARE

Jack,

Many months ago I wrote you a letter that got published in your magazine about a shareware BBS package called VBBS. As a subscriber to your magazine I recently read another letter preaching the wonders of VBBS and decided I could be silent no longer. If you could print this letter, or at the very least, an excerpt from this letter, I believe it would save many people from the headache that I have experienced using VBBS over the last SEVERAL years. As a fairly large system in the Ventura county area running 12 lines and 60,000 files on-line (7 GB), my installation was atypical for VBBS. I was one of Roland's [the author] largest installations. As a 1 line system, the product is very viable, easy to use and does exactly what it professes - a simple BBS solution with modules that give a VBBS installation _touches_ into FidoNet and the InterNet. Unfortunately, that's where it ends!

In a nutshell, after contriving multiple "quick fixes" to address problems and bugs in the software over the last year that were extremely annoying and problematic for both my users and myself, I tried in vain to contact the author. Although there is a "business" office that is easy to reach for sales purposes, Richard Shell (a very nice guy by the way) who answers the phone, cannot possibly wield the volume of technical support and bug reports that he receives. Therefore, as I became engrossed in trying to solve my own problems, I inadvertently picked up the role of a "tech support" person for OS/2, DigiBoards and VBBS.

Although I tried my best to help as many people as I could, I was overwhelmed with calls and problems. After attempting to contact the author on _numerous_ occasions, leaving anywhere from 30-40 messages over a period of two months, hundreds of BBS crashes for unexplained reasons, complete lack of support, promises of updates and modules never released, advertising features that never appeared, and many other reasons, I decided to switch BBS packages altogether.

As a pay board, the reliability of my system is obviously the key to my making even a dent in the business world of interactive information services. VBBS was _not_ a reliable platform on which to base my future or the future of my business. The funny thing is, I probably would not have converted if the author had at least been available to work some of these things out. The few times I was able to reach

him the problems were dismissed as operating system related and there was nothing he could do about them. Even more humorous was the fact that ALL BBS software has problems like these, however, every BBS platform I have ever seen incorporates some kind of destructive error trapping to prevent an error from completely crashing the bbs or a single node. Roland refused to even consider the possibility that his software was unreliable and as he doesn't run a sizeable system, he really wasn't even in a position to test his own software and therefore never incorporated any type of AFTER the fact error trapping.

In the end, I ended up contacting Steve Klingler of Clark Development and addressed some of my concerns with him. My main concern was switching to a "commercial" BBS package and the response that I would receive. Obviously, from the size of their installed sysop base, the product is reliable, however, I was not expecting the type of reliability, response and flexibility this company had to offer. In a nutshell, I'm kicking myself for not making this switch sooner and I encourage any sysop having trouble with reliability and their software to examine this package very closely. Their technical support is always available on my first try, and they ALWAYS have the correct answers and know just how to solve 99.9% of the problems we experience. Alif Ambler and Steve Carpenter are two of the best technical support reps I've ever worked with and there are several other guys there I haven't had much opportunity to work with, but they are right on nonetheless.

I have contracted a local programmer to write a utility to convert the user-base files of VBBS to the current PCBoard format and an additional utility that will produce a printout of your entire VBBS configuration to aid in the conversion of filebases, directories and message areas which is available for download on the Salt Air BBS, Clark Developments demo system.

VBBS is fine for the 1 line system that doesn't require any support and doesn't need the annoying bugs fixed. For the rest of us who take pride in our systems and who want things to be perfect for our users (and who would also like to be able to get some sleep or take a vacation) I highly recommend PCBoard. I knew it was too much when I was forced to spend \$3,500 on a laptop computer JUST because if my system went down and a user paged me, I would have to dial in and reset any number of VBBS nodes from a destructive crash. I had to carry this laptop around with me everywhere I went! I didn't know that BBS software could be

so reliable and so responsive until I bit the bullet and purchased my copy of PCBoard. I'll never regret it.

Sincerely,

Lee Ladisky
Sysop - Beyond the Realm Info Services
(805) 987 - 5506, Camarillo, California

Lee:

It's a hard trip. BBS software verges on the edge of comprising an operating system in many ways. And each is the result of a vision of the developer as to what a BBS or online service really is - which varies tremendously. If you know precisely what you want a service to do, how large it will become, etc. it is difficult even then to determine which package will do the job best. And for most of us, operating a BBS is a discovery process. What it is or is meant to be changes over time. As a result, it is rare to pick a package and find that it was precisely the right one, and most of us go through several along the way. Conversion is always a nightmare. If I could make it easy within these pages, I would do so. I could make it LOOK easy and sell a lot of magazines that way, but it would do a grave injustice to our readership and many of the people who develop these various packages, so I have declined to do so, and will continue to decline to do so.

Jack Rickard

COMMENT/COMPLEMENT :

Dear Mr. Rickard:

I recently bought my first copy of Boardwatch Magazine (October 94), and it is a impressive magazine. Keep up the good work! :) Anyways.. To my comment.....

While reading the letters to the editor, I noticed a letter by the SysOp of the Corporate Ladder BBS (Randy Miller) comment on Virtual BBS (VBBS) by Roland De Graaf. I must say that his letter is completely true. VBBS is a extremely fast, and extremely easy software to set up. I have 5 networks currently (4 VNET types [VBBS type], and a UUOC type [Internet]). I have message bases gated between these subs. The time it took to set these nets up, along with the gating of the subs took about 15 minutes each (Internet took about 5).

VBBS is by far the easiest software I have worked with, and the most customizable, as well as the least expensive. There are hundreds of free (Yet very useful) utilities such as

programs to delete users not only by the number of days they've called, but by their Post/Call ratio, and Up/Down ratio as well. There are numerous dupe account checkers, and many other useful utilities.

Roland De Graaf, the author of Virtual BBS, is legally blind, yet has (in my opinion) come out with the most easy, user friendly, and powerful BBS ever made for the money. Changing a key on the main menu, making security levels for each key, adding keys, or even an infinite number of stacked menus can be achieved by using DOS edit, or even the ancient EDLIN! And the FREE Internet module/interface was made in 10 days, complete with mail routing across multiple networks, and multiple types (Like USEnet to FIDOnet!)

I also noticed your reply to Mr. Miller that there are "Too many BBSs, and so little time, and that you have heard there is now an OS/2 version". Well, since there has been a native OS/2 version since version 6.10, and we are up to 6.14 now, and (hopefully) on the verge of the greatest upgrade yet, I guess that proves you have not had that much time.. hehe ;)

If there is any information you would be willing to accept, I can give you any information you might need (Almost..:). I am a [VSB] (V)irtual (S)upport (Board, and know a lot about the software. If there is anything you would like to know, please let me know — Mr. Miller is right — VBBS needs its time in the Spotlight!!

Keep up with your great magazine, and look for a subscription card from me soon :).

-- Vince Rathbun --
SysOp: The Black Tower; Austin, Texas
Internet: bknight@btower.ksuib.csu.com
VirtualNET: 1 @1512046

Vince:

Yeah, I guess I got a little lost somewhere between version 6.10 and 6.14. I hate it when that happens.

If it works for you, it works enough.

Jack Rickard

TELEBITS

RUMORS AND BITS

- RUMORS AND BITS
- AT&T PURCHASES INTERCHANGE FROM ZIFF COMMUNICATIONS
- S-MOS CARDIO-486
 - SEIKO MESSAGE WATCH
- ONEWORLD COMBO TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVER
 - CISCO AND CYLINK TEAM FOR SECURITY
- STUDY PURCHASING AND PAYMENT ON THE INTERNET: DIGITAL MONEY TAKES OFF
- eSOFT'S SYSOP INTERNET CLASS
 - NOKIA \$40 AND 680 MB MAGNETIC CARTRIDGE DRIVES
- FRANKLIN TELECOM CORP. INTRODUCES NEW FAMILY OF DATA ROUTERS
- HEWLETT-PACKARD AND MICROSOFT WORKING ON WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS
- TDK V. 34 PC CARD FOR POWERBOOK
 - EPSON'S NEW DYQ DRIVE
 - BORLAND'S DELPHI95
- NIWOT NETWORKS
 - ENDANGERED SPECIES
- GALICIT-BIRTHDAY
 - CONNECTIVITY CONFERENCES
- COMPUERVE CUTS CONNECT TIME RATES
- LAST MONTH'S FAX SURVEY
- LOVE BYTES - ONLINE DATING HANDBOOK

Client/Server bulletin boards - Galaticomm, Inc., is about to release a new version of Major BBS, but it won't be called Major BBS at all. What would have been Major BBS version 7.0 will be released this spring as WorldGroup 1.0. The new product is essentially a shareware Windows client with a modified Major BBS host. Company founder Tim Stryker started the project some two years ago as a packet protocol engine allowing multiple operations on a BBS with a presentation similar to that of America Online. The result is icons and windows out the yin/yang and it looks very hot.

Meanwhile, Mustang Software is working on a similar client/server BBS product. The host actually runs under Windows NT and can support 64 lines simultaneously - again a packet protocol with a Windows interface allowing multiple operations. Mustang is installing a T1 connection in late January to work on their Internet projects.

eSoft began shipping version 2.3 of their TBBS bulletin board package on January 16th. The new package has some major performance improvements, a new file management system that caused raves in the beta test group, and with a 96 line version available within a few weeks. eSoft has also been holding monthly Internet Workshop classes in Denver for about 50 TBBS operators. The work-

shops actually connect a roomful of computers into an "internet" one step at a time with explanations of routing, domain name service, etc. and finally connect this internet to the big-I Internet via a T1 line. The monthly workshops have become quite popular among the TBBS aficionados who are trying to make it through the learning curve on the Internet.

CompuServe and UNISYS reached a settlement regarding the use of Lempel-Zev-Welche (LZW) compression in the GIF89a graphics file format. It would seem CompuServe uses LZW, and UNISYS has a patent on it. As part of the settlement, CompuServe has begun trying to license software developers who include GIF decoding. The entire thing has broken out into quite an imbroglio. So far, much more heat than light even on what happened, who said what to who, and why they did that. We're going to forfeit the quick story on this one as there appears to be more in the woods on this one than is commonly held. John C. Dvorak will tackle it in our March issue with some authority.

InfoWorld columnist Bob Metcalfe, after reviewing Boardwatch Magazine a bit, has decided against changing the spelling of his last name to Metcalf despite our publishing faux pas and will retain the original family tradition of Metcalfe with an e. Our apologies Bob. ♦

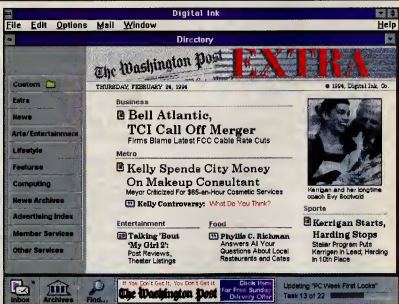
AT&T ENTERS ONLINE FRAY WITH PURCHASE OF INTERCHANGE ONLINE NETWORK FROM ZIFF COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY

Ziff Communications Company has sold off the Ziff publishing empire a bit at a time over the past couple of months. SoftBank purchased the Interop trade show, Forstman Little purchased the magazine publishing group, and on December 22nd AT&T purchased the Interchange Online Network for a reported \$50 million. This is probably the highest price ever paid for an online service that technically is not in operation yet and has no paying callers. The service is currently in beta test and expected to open sometime in 1995.

The service has attracted some traditional print publications based on a very graphic interface and good use of fonts and graphics. *The Washington Post*, the Minneapolis-based *Star*

Tribune, and Cowles Business Media have all signed on to the project.

"With its advanced architecture and new business model for online publishing, Interchange is clearly



leading the next-generation of online service," said John C. Petrillo, president of Business Communications Services at AT&T. "Bringing this product to market represents our continuing commitment to provide AT&T customers with easy access to valuable content, as well as innovative and sophisticated ways of communicating."

"AT&T brings enormous advantages to Interchange Online Network and to its publishing partners," said Michael E. Kolowich, president of Interchange Online Network. "This is true not only in the obvious things like telephony and global data networking, but also in transaction processing and in the art of caring for millions of customers. We'd already planned 1995 introductions online, on the Internet and on CD-ROM."

AT&T allows us to raise our sights and gives our customers access to entirely new information delivery channels."

The key to the high valuation is a long-term strategic agreement giving Interchange the rights to the editorial content of the Ziff Publications, now owned by Forstman Little. Titled Interchange Computing, the text of magazines such as PC Magazine and PC Computing will appear on the service. Rumor has it that many within the publishing group are more than a bit upset over this legacy relationship tying them to the Interchange online service. The Interchange Online Network will remain based in Cambridge Massachusetts. Interchange Online Network, 25 First Street, Cambridge, MA 02141; (617)252-5000 voice; (617)252-5111 fax. ♦

TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

By Jim Thompson - Western Plains Service

S-MOS CARDIO-486

Talk about future shock! S-MOS SYSTEMS is offering a fully functional IBM AT computer that is literally the size of a CREDIT CARD. Called the S-MOS CARDIO-486, it measures about 3.4 inches by 2.2 inches.

The personal computer, which the company says is 100 percent IBM-compatible, consists of an Intel 486SL Super Chipset, including 8 Kb of cache and floating point unit (FPU). It also contains either 4 or 8 MB of memory, PC AT BIOS ROM, plus an I/O controller with two serial ports, a parallel port and speaker port. An I/O controller offers keyboard, mouse and analog signal inputs, and a VA subsystem provides LCD and CRT monitor outputs. It comes standard with a built-in floppy disk controller and port, an IDE port and an ISA bus interface and is available in 25 MHz or 33 MHz clock speeds. Versions with 12 MB or 16 MB will be available in early 1995.

You can bet that this miniaturization will open all sorts of possibilities. Look for computer functions inside lots of new products.



CARDIO Marketing Dept., (800)228-3964.

SEIKO MESSAGE WATCH

Move over DICK TRACY, your old wrist radio is about to be retired! The latest lifestyle accessory in trendy Los Angeles is a high speed global wireless communications device that doubles as a wristwatch. The SEIKO MessageWatch combines a PAGER and PERSONAL INFORMATION RECEIVER in a standard-sized WRISTWATCH. Affordable and easy to operate, the SEIKO MessageWatch receives personal paging messages, as well as weather forecasts, sports scores and other information, all displayed on the watch face. Retail prices start at \$79.95. Monthly charges begin at \$2.49 for information services only, and \$8.95 for paging and information.

SEIKO Communications of America, (503)531-1623.



ONEWORLD COMBO TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVER

Also for the Macintosh, GLOBAL VILLAGE COMMUNICATION INC. has introduced ONEWORLD COMBO, a full-function, plug-and-play TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVER. OneWorld Combo gives each user on a Macintosh network the ability to send faxes and dial out to online services or bulletin board systems (BBSs), without the need for individual modems and phone lines. OneWorld Combo is also a complete Apple Remote Access (ARA) 1.0/2.0 server that allows offsite Macintosh users to connect to their company network from virtually any remote location.

Available with or without two PowerPort/Mercury fax/modems, the packages will be priced at \$2,099 and \$1,499, respectively.

Global Village Communication Inc., (800)736-4821.



CISCO AND CYLINK TEAM FOR SECURITY

CISCO SYSTEMS and CYLINK have announced a joint partnership to develop a family of LAN and WAN security products. The first product, router-based PACKET ENCRYPTION SOFTWARE, will be available in mid-1995. The single-site security process that will reside between any two destinations, regardless of the internetwork's size or the number of LAN/WAN links. The software will be media-independent, operating over Ethernet, Token Ring, FDDI, X.25, SMDS, point-to-point, Frame Relay and Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) networks.

Cisco Systems Inc., (408)526-8780.

STUDY "PURCHASING AND PAYMENT ON THE INTERNET: DIGITAL MONEY TAKES OFF"

A new study from KILLEN & ASSOCIATES, "Purchasing and Payment on the Internet: Digital Money Takes Off," forecasts that shoppers around the world - at home and in businesses - will use the Internet to purchase \$600 BILLION of goods and services in the year 2000. The study claims this will account for nearly 8% of the \$8 trillion of goods and services purchased that year. Cost for the full report is \$3,200. This is one more indication that the Internet is THE place to be for any serious business.

Killen & Associates Inc., (415)323-3842.

eSOFT'S SYSOP INTERNET CLASS

Speaking of a low cost solution, I had the pleasure of attending Phil Becker's two day seminar on connecting your BBS to the Internet. As usual, Phil didn't miss a thing. The SYSOP INTERNET CLASSES cover everything from what a user is up against and the latest in client software, to unraveling the mysteries of routers and the details on his new IPAD. If you need a basic understanding of what getting on the Internet means (both from the client and the server end) the eSoft, Inc. seminar may be just the thing for you. COST: \$295.

Patty White, eSoft, Inc., (303)699-6565

NOMAI 540 AND 680 MB MAGNETIC CARTRIDGE DRIVES

LYNX REAL-TIME SYSTEMS announced that LynxOS for PowerPC 60X will be available in January 1995 for the Motorola MYME1603 single-board computer, which is based on the PowerPC 603.

NOMAI of Avranches, France has announced a new removable cartridge storage platform - the MCD. The new drive and cartridges are the first to follow the new MCD (Magnetic Cartridge Drive) specifications. They will offer from 540 to 680 Megabytes of storage on a 3 1/2" cartridge.

Internet:
nomai@applelink.apple.com

FRANKLIN TELECOM CORP. INTRODUCES NEW FAMILY OF DATA ROUTERS

TELECOM CORP. has announced the introduction of a new family of DATA ROUTERS. Franklin "Tempest" routers have been designed specifically for use by small business, in remote offices of larger corporations, and are compatible with the global network. The new Tempest family includes four models. Each model is intended to work with different data transmission facilities. The new Tempest routers have been priced from 10 to 50 percent lower than competitive models. I haven't had a chance to take a close look at these routers, but what information I have received is definitely promising. This could be one more low cost solution to connecting a BBS to the Internet.

Franklin Telecom, (707)525-0807.

HEWLETT-PACKARD AND MICROSOFT WORKING ON WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY and MICROSOFT CORP. are developing an INFRARED communications solution to address what they see as "the growing need for low-cost, wireless communication between PCs and printers and other peripheral products."

The software solution is being designed for PCs and peripherals with IrDA-compliant infrared ports that use Microsoft's Windows 95 operating system.

Hewlett-Packard Company, (408)553-2916.

TDK V. 34 PC CARD FOR POWERBOOK

On the topic of PCMCIA, Machintosh has also entered the arena. TDK Systems has announced the first V.34 PC card for the APPLE POWERBOOK 500 Series utilizing the PowerBook PCMCIA Expansion Module. This PCMCIA card supports 28.8 Kbps. data, 14.4Kbps send and receive fax, V.42 bis/MNP 5 data compression, V.42/MNP 2-4 error correction, and is fully compliant with the ITU-T V.34 specification. It includes MNP10 Adverse Channel protocol for reliable connections, as well as TDK's DirectConnect Cellular technology which allows the card to connect directly to many popular cellular phones using a simple cable (cellular cable accessory sold separately).

TDK Systems, (916)478-8274.

EPSON'S NEW DYO DRIVE

EPSON has introduced its new DYO drive that combines a full-function PCMCIA TYPE III SOCKET and a 1.44 MB, 3.5-inch FLOPPY DISK DRIVE, in a single half-height package. Suggested price will be under \$200. This will no doubt be the final push PCMCIA needs to establish itself as a true standard in the industry. I want one!

Epson America, Inc., (310)787-6300.

BORLAND'S DELPHI95

BORLAND INTERNATIONAL, INC. claims an entire industry is being built around its upcoming visual application development environment, which is code named DELPHI95. Reportedly, over two dozen books and trade publications along with multiple third party tools and libraries are already in the works to support the new product.

According to Borland, Delphi95 offers client-server developers a "unique combination of high-performance, native code compilation, visual two-way tools for rapid application development and fully scalable database technology." It will also offer the "productivity of an object-oriented 4GL with the performance of an optimizing compiler."

Borland International Inc., (408)431-5862.

NIWOT NETWORKS, FILE TRANSFER KINGS

by Brian Gallagher

Niwot Networks, Inc. of Boulder Colorado is a company dedicated to high-speed data transfers manufacturing plug-in cards capable of utilizing the full bandwidth of a T-1 between sites using either a dial-up, leased line or private synchronous facilities. Ideal for the transfer of large files, such as in the printing and graphic arts industries, as well as CAD files for engineering firms and various medical imaging applications, the cards are destined to be copied and distributed widely throughout the online industry wherever large files are involved.

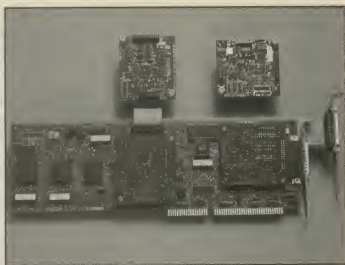
Bill Gibson, president and CEO of Niwot Networks, who has a bachelors and a masters degree in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University, started the company because he saw an opportunity to build communications products that weren't being addressed by anyone else - basically to bring high speed synchronous communications to the PC market. After working with the remote control of Amdahl mainframe computers from 1972 to 1980, and working for telecommunications companies through 1987, he started Niwot in November of 1987 with the premise that "a T-1 to the home should be \$60 to \$70 per month," which is why the first card the company developed was geared towards a T-1 line.

The AT/T1D card features a 16-bit "non-buffered master adapter" AT bus interface (EISA compatible), eliminating the "double shuffle delay"; full-duplex reliable transmission on the T-1 facility, (1.536 Mbps); simplex one-way transmission on the T-1 facility, (1.536 Mbps); transmit timing derived from T-1 facility or from internal timing; HDLC LAPB/LAPD error checking and flow control; Novell NetWare compatible drivers, available user-installable Novell NetWare and PDS drivers; available developer kits including diagnostics; and compatibility for PC/Route Software and for IP routing and PC/Bridge for bridging.

The AT/SD, used in eSoft's IPAD, carries the same characteristics as the AT/T1D with the exception that it does not run at the fixed data rate of 1.536 Mbps - rather the card has a variable speed from 9.6 Kbps to 4.0 Mbps., giving it the capabilities to be hooked up to anything from a 9600 baud modem to a fractional T-3, (FT-3), and everything in between. The reason for the 4.0 Mbps top-end rate for this card is there is no on-board DSU (digital service unit), unlike the AT/T1D. However, you will need an external DSU to operate this card.

The card has two daughter boards that piggy back on the AT/SD that support different electrical characteristics, for example: RS-232, V.35, and EIA-530. Depending on the system you are hooking it up to the piggy back daughter boards can be interchanged to fit your set up. The bulk of the manufacturing is done at their Boulder offices with the sole exception of wave soldering which is done by FNS & T, Inc. in Longmont, Colorado.

Jay Knutson, vice president , who likewise has a history in telecommunications technology bought into the company in October of 1989 after first meeting Gibson during a lamas



Niwot Network's AT/SD with two daughter boards

class in 1981, (their sons were born three days apart and attended many of the same schools). Knutson boasts, "We are the very best in the world at moving large files," citing a list of customers including AT&T Bell Labs in Holmdel, New Jersey, UniBase Systems in Salt Lake City, Utah, Satellite Imaging Systems also in Salt Lake City, Utah, Prism Imaging in Denver, Colorado, Medical Information Systems in St. Louis, Missouri, Dominator Radiology Systems in San Diego, California, Federal National Mortgage Corp. in Washington, D.C., Radiology Management in Santa Monica, California, The Veterans Administration in Birmingham, Alabama, Digital Generation Systems in San Francisco, California, COMDEX '93 in Las Vegas, Nevada, American Color in Phoenix, Arizona, and the medical giant Siemens Gammasonics, Inc. in Hoffman Estates, Illinois.

The reason so many companies are looking Niwot's way are the vastly improved transfer rates when switching to their equipment. For instance, the Federal National Mortgage Corporation tested Niwot's DFT (Direct File Transfer) equipment against their existing Novell Link product. Using Novell when backing up three to five gigabyte file servers over 256 Kbps digital links, FannieMae experienced 17 Kbps of throughput on a 132 MB test file, or a 6.6 percent utilization of their bandwidth. Swapping out the Novell product for the Niwot DFT product they transferred the same file with an average 250 Kbps throughput - a 97.9 percent efficiency rating.

What makes the Niwot design superior to many existing products is the elimination of routers. "When I think of routers," Knutson said, "it reminds me of old-time telephones when you had to dial the operator to dial your number." In addition to PC products, Niwot manufacturers cards for Macintosh as well. The AT/SD card is priced at \$890.00.

Niwot Networks, Inc., 2200 Central Avenue, Suite B, Boulder, CO 80301; (303)444-7765 voice; (303)444-7767 fax. ♦

ENDANGERED SPECIES

by Brian Gallagher

In an industry literally moving at the speed of light, it is not uncommon for things that are "gimmies" one day, to disappear like dew on the morning grass with the dawn of a new day. And there is probably something on your desk right now, something that you would not normally consider in looking for ways to increase your speed of operations, your core productivity, that will not be a "gimmie" in the very near future. But it is there, right under your fingertips.

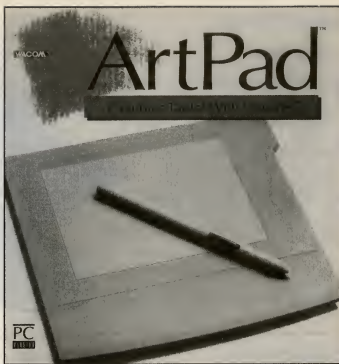
What I am talking about is your mouse, that little unfurry friend that occupies one port or another, in some fashion or another of your computer. When mice (or is that mice?) were introduced with Macintosh computers, DOS fanatics curbed at the thought of getting away from strict keyboard commands, "Give Me C:\ or Give Me Death." Today, with Windows as more of a standard than a dysfunctional disease, despite how ever much the DOS guys wish it was not, a mouse - the navigator of the dreaded point and click interface - is a "gimmie" on any system that hopes to function with any practicality in the 1990s and beyond.

There are mice of all different varieties. There are grey ones that look like cigarette boxes, white ones with curvy shapes, ones with nifty logos in designer colors, ones with balls in the center for which to roll around, ones with buttons on the side, ones with buttons on top, ones with buttons on the top and the sides and even ones that look like mice - er, mice, whiskers and all. And like mice, these mice have a tail, not something you usually concern yourself with as it serves as more of a leash than a wagging, balancing appendage for which we - as humans, have no real concept of which it is to really have much less use in a functional sort of way. But that is rather irrelevant as the mices, mousees, meeces?...desk rodents of the future - will not have tails, in fact, they will not even exist.

Yes, it is this molded plastic species, this icon of modern day computer automation that is destined for extinction. Joining the ranks of Mainframes, the Osborne portable computer, the Zenith computer with its proprietary operating system, the 286, and the Pentiums and DEC Alphs of tomorrow...mice will not be something you would really want to have on your desk, well, at least not if anybody can see what is actually on your desk.

No, instead we will have pens and tablets - wireless pens at that, or pens that draw right on the screen or even tablets that are operated by the voltage in your finger tips. Using a cursor is something kids will have learned in Grammar school, and not in the C++ programming course our kids will likely be taking by that time but, in their English and handwriting courses, where they will learn the basics of hand eye coordination - creating all sorts of ringed and curvy shapes to record thoughts and history. A mouse requires a certain bit of finesse, a certain amount of experience to control to a maximum efficiency; a stylus of a pen/pencil shape however, has been ingrained in the human experience for thousands of years; mice are pushing 15 years by comparison.

My brother Rodney recently installed one of these newfangled contraptions on a computer he has at his office and suddenly it was all the rage: "How easy?" and "Hey lookie here!" were all that could be heard. The living skeptic that I am I grabbed the unobtrusive instrument roughly and mashed it down onto the tablet, when it was right around a quarter of an inch above the surface I noticed



Wacom Technology Corp's Artpad - cursor control of tomorrow

the cursor move just a tinsy-bit before impact. Then, floating the tip of the instrument a short distance above the tablet I swung it around in a curly-Q and the mouse-cursor followed. I yanked it up and down like a seismograph during California earthquake, it emulated stroke for stroke. I high-lighted, deleted, high-lighted again in such a natural fashion I nearly forgot I was working on a computer screen and not a piece of paper - amazing, simple, ergonomic...simply fantastic.

The computer-graphics field is a very apparent application for this instrument - we have a WACOM ArtPad in the office, which has a pressure sensitive tip with up to 256 different loads that it will register - making a line fatter with more pressure. At \$199.00, it is truly a wonderful tool, it doesn't even have batteries, the pen draws the power it needs directly from the pad. But there will be other applications, editing for one. Oh sure, there will be die-hards who insist on keeping their mice simply because they are accustomed to them, just as there were those felt that 14.4 Kbps was the end-all in data transmission speeds, but when all is said and done it is mice as we now know them, that will Die Hard.

The revelation was as complete as it was compelling - there is no turning back, stylus, or fingertip control of a cursor is a reality and it will be a standard in five years, (that is save an eye or voice commanded device which I doubt will appear by then). And this poses two interesting dilemmas: 1) What to do with all those mice that we thought we wanted and really do not; and 2) If there is not a mouse - per se, will we still call that little thing that wings around the screen a "mouse-cursor," or will that be a leftover term from the cursed mouse? ♦

WACOM Technology Corporation
501 SE Columbia Shores Blvd., Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98661, USA
Telephone:
General : 206-750-8882
Fax: 206-750-8924

Galacti-Birthday

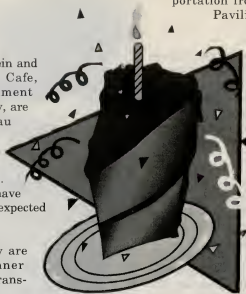
by Brian Gallagher

Two California sysops, Ira Goldstein and Don Adler, of The Hard Drive Cafe, (818)993-5516 and the Info-Tainment Multiplex, (818)718-1600 respectively, are planning a "Major Polynesian Luau Birthday Bash" for Galacticom, makers of Major BBS to be held on Thursday, August 17, 1995 at ONE BBSCON in Tampa, Florida. Adler claims more than 500 sysops have already signed up and that 800 are expected to attend the event.

Tickets to the 10th birthday party are \$32.50 and include a pre-dinner Wine/Beer bar, all or part of the trans-

portation from ONE BBSCON to the Lupton Luau Pavilion, set on a 100 acre ranch where the event will be held, a giant Galacti-Birthday cake, coffee mugs and or carrying bags and a complimentary T-shirt. There will also be prize drawings for software and hardware goodies to be given away.

Those interested in sponsoring or attending the event should contact Goldstein or Adler. The Hard Drive Cafe, (818)993-5516 BBS; (818)993-4200 voice; Info-Tainment Multiplex, P.O.Box 2451, Winnetka, CA 91396-2451; (818)718-1600 BBS; (818)727-1400 fax; (818)727-7929 voice. ♦



CONNECTIVITY CONFERENCES

by Brian Gallagher

Jupiter Communications Company, a research and consulting firm specializing in communications technologies, announced a series of upcoming conferences concerning the online industry for 1995. The events are as follows:

February 27-28, and March 1

The second annual Consumer Online Services conference will be held in New York's Crowne Plaza Hotel with an emphasis on "Entry Strategies for Mainstream Media" and a pre-conference seminar on the integration and distribution of CD ROMs with online services.

April 18-19

The Online Marketplace conference will address the strategies for building a successful marketplace in the burgeoning online world. To be held in Chicago, Illinois, Jupiter hopes to bring together both the players who are making cyberspace profitable now, and those who would like to do so in the future.

Late May-June

The Global Online Services conference to be held in Brussels, Belgium, is touted as an effort to expand the online marketplace overseas.

September 19-21

The Online Developers Conference to be held in San Francisco, California is aiming to bring together executives from CompuServe, America Online, Prodigy investment bankers and others to discuss promoting efficient, compelling and profitable online applications.

October 24-26

The fourth annual conference on "Defining the Electronic Consumer" will be held in New York City zeroing in on the "Emerging Applications in the Home" for online communications and purchasing.

December 5-7

The "Consumer Information Appliance" event held in New York City, examines approaches to interactive video, information and transaction devices and platforms. Sessions will include: wireless devices, broadcast services, hybrid systems, screen phones, cable TV and intelligent networks and gaming/gambling devices.

For more information on any of these conferences contact: David Schwartz, Alex Engel or Heidi Reich at (800)488-4345 voice; (212)941-9252 voice; (212)941-7376 fax. Jupiter Communications Company, 594 Broadway, STE 1003, New York, NY 10012. ♦



CALL FOR PAPERS

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Tampa, Florida

ONE, Inc. is accepting papers and proposals for educational sessions and seminars on technologies and issues related to electronic bulletin boards, online services and the Internet. Papers and proposals should include full contact information and biography paragraph and must be received by April 1, 1995.

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Aurora, Colorado 80013

Phone: (303) 693-5253
FAX: (303) 693-5518

COMPUSERVE CUTS CONNECT-TIME RATES

CompuServe Incorporated announced January 9 a plan, effective **February 5, 1995** to cut their connect-time rates by **50%**. Charges for 9600 bps and 14.4 kbps access will drop to **\$4.80 per hour** from **\$9.60** per hour creating a single connect-time rate for all speeds from 300 bps to 14.4 kbps. This is CompuServe's third price cut in three years.

At the same time, CompuServe is **RAISING** its monthly membership fee from **\$8.95** to **\$9.95** and enhancing the basic service package. Users can now send **90** e-mail messages per month at no charge compared with **60** messages previously, lowered mail transaction fees, and added the Executive Service Option with no added charges. The cost of additional mail dropped from **\$0.15** for the first **7500** characters and **\$0.05** for each additional **2500** characters to **\$0.10** for the first **7500** and **\$0.02** for each additional **7,500** characters. CompuServe now claims a membership of some **2.5 million** users. CompuServe Incorporated, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., PO Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220; (614)457-8600 voice.

LAST MONTH'S FAX SURVEY

Last month we published a fax survey page asking BBS operators about their bulletin boards and received a surprisingly large response with some equally surprising answers.

Of BBS's responding, **31.43%** were running on a single telephone line, a much lower percentage than popular wisdom would indicate and **68.57%** were running on two or more telephone lines. The average for all responses was **6.82** lines per BBS and if we examine just the multiline systems, the average line count per BBS was **9.53**

We also asked how many users were listed in their current user log. This number would indicate anyone who had ever called even once. And note that many BBS callers explore hundreds of BBS, so this is not a unique number. The single line systems averaged **166** total callers, while multiline systems averaged **1454** callers with an overall average of **1049** callers per BBS.

We asked how many regular callers accessed the BBS at least once per month and predictably derived a very different number. The single line systems averaged **66** regular users while the multiline services averaged **653** regular users with an overall average of **469** regular callers.

If we take these first two items, we find the **6.82** average lines services a total caller base of **1049** or about **154** callers per line. The average number of REGULAR callers per line drops to about **69** callers per line. We can also surmise generally that some **44.70%** of the typical BBS userlog contains callers who call at least once per month or are considered ACTIVE callers.

The multiline bulletin boards averaged some **131.5** new callers per month, while single line systems averaged but **24**

new callers. All boards averaged about **98** new callers per month.

With regards to fees, **34.28%** of the systems were free and did not charge a fee of any kind. Of the **65.71%** who did, they averaged **344** paying callers representing **73.34%** of their regular callers and **32.79%** of their total user log. Gross monthly income for those receiving fees was **\$2845** with the largest system reporting some **\$35,000** per month and the smallest reporting some **\$7.50** per month. This would indicate about **\$8.27** per month per paying caller.

We asked how long the BBS had been in operation. We were surprised at the longevity of these systems with the average online life here of **38.22** months and at least one system nearly claiming to have invented it as early as 1979.

Fully **60%** of all bulletin boards responding to the survey offered at least an Internet connection for electronic mail and USENET newsgroups. We found it interesting that of the **40%** who didn't, over half responded NOT YET rather than NO.

In summary, our AVERAGE BOARDWATCH READING SURVEY ANSWERING BBS OPERATOR runs a system with:

6.82 lines
1049 callers in user log
469 regular callers.(45% of userlog)
98 new callers each month
344 paying callers.
\$2845 gross monthly income
\$34,140 gross annual income
\$8.27 per month per paying caller
Went online: December, 1991.

Curious "what if" things pop out of such surveys. From other work we've done, we have estimated some **67,000** public dialup bulletin boards operating in the U.S. That would indicate about **21,058** single line systems with **45942** multiline systems. At an average **9.53** lines per multiline system, we're looking at **458,885** telephone lines devoted to BBS operation in the United States. If they pay **\$25** per month per line on average just in telco line charges, and business lines tend to be much higher, some **\$137,665,500** in local telco line charges are generated each year by bulletin boards.

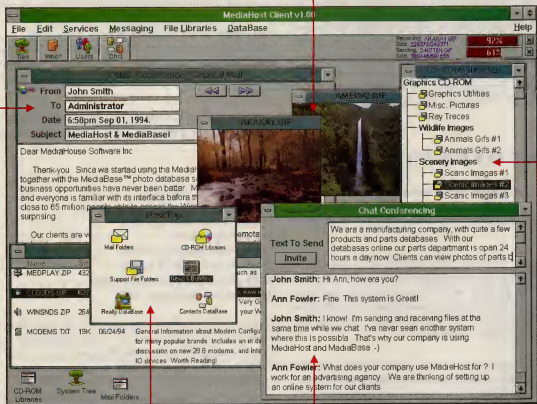
If indeed **65.71%** of all systems charge fees, and they average **\$2845** per month in gross income, then we would expect some **44025** of these boards to be generating **\$125 million** per month or about **\$1.5 BILLION** in access fees per year. Our relatively tiny self-selecting sample probably doesn't bear all that weight statistically, but it must be at least indicative that BBS economic activity is considerably larger than common wisdom would seem to indicate. ♦

So You Need to Setup an Online Service...

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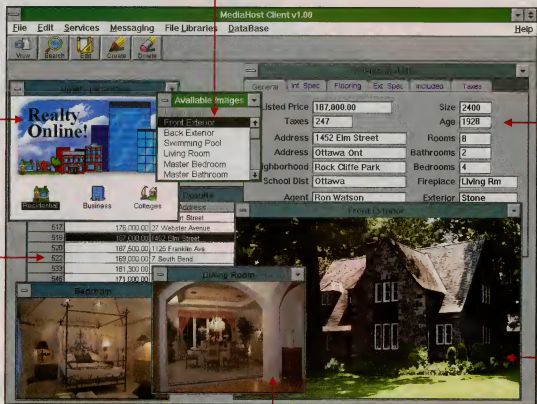
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32 Eardley Road,
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Demo System 819-682-3330
Fax 819-685-0994



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PC Digest
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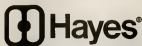
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*Other 28.8 K modems have 4 to 1 data compression to achieve 115,200 bit/s. OPTIMA 288 has 8 to 1 data compression for 230,400 bit/s. The speed you achieve will be affected by your computer systems, communications software, and the compressibility of data being transmitted. To achieve maximum speeds, two Hayes OPTIMA 288 high-speed modems must be used. **Fastest in four out of five file transfer tests. CBN / The Gallup Organization Inc. 1993.

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LOVE BYTES - THE ONLINE DATING HANDBOOK

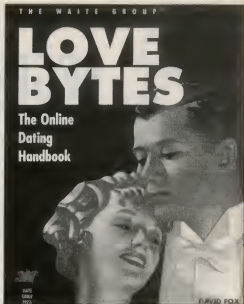
There are a few publishing companies that just ALWAYS put out good stuff. Anything from O'Reilly is always good, though it may be on a topic you are disinterested in. Similarly, I've always found the Waite Group Press to put out some just superb technical books. At first, I was really surprised to receive a book titled LOVE BYTES - THE ONLINE DATING HANDBOOK. And from the description on the outside cover, this appeared to be the sleaziest schlock ever printed to try to cash in on the current frenzy over the "Information SuperHypeway."

But after looking through this 300-page book, I'm not certain it's not just the victim of an overactive marketing department at the publishers. The entire package reeks of schlock on the outside, but between the covers I was surprised and delighted with it. The book has a really pretty good basic introduction to getting a modem and software together and getting it to dial online services. It then provides individual chapters on electronic bulletin boards, the Internet, Prodigy, CompuServe, AOL, Delphi, and Genie,

and how to use these services to locate people of similar interest and correspond with them in useful ways.

Each chapter starts out with little story vignette of two people who met online to some eventual good outcome, usually terminating in marriage or cohabitation. There have been enough of these stories in the past that they've become a bit of a cliché, but I was somehow drawn into these people's lives and some of these little stories were actually quite enchanting. One story included a photo of the offspring resulting from the match.

The essential element is that author David Fox is actually a pretty good writer. He's taken the concept of why people meet and fall in love online, and woven into a book that also describes some of the basic and some of the finer points of using each of these electronic services as a kind of singles bar where you meet people and get to know them. The prose is light, funny, without being too cute to actually read, and he's done a pretty good job of capturing the real communication between people that differentiates the online experience from just the viewing



of pretty screens. If you see this book on the rack, you're initial reaction to the cover and package is likely to be revulsion. But you might want to crack it open and browse a page or two before moving on. It has its moments and perhaps something valuable to say. *Love Bytes: The Online Dating Handbook*, ISBN 1-878739-88-3, \$18.95, Wait Group Press, 800-368-9369. ♦

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BEGINNER'S LUCK by Doug Shaker

SOFTWARE, SOFTWARE EVERYWHERE AND NOT A DROP TO DRINK

Doug Shaker owns and operates The Smalltalk Store. He can be reached via e-mail at doug@smalltalk.com. He has one wife, two children, three cats, four computers and five telephones.

I'm trying to pick the software for my new BBS. I have learned a few things in the process. I believe Mark Twain said, "a man who carries a cat home by the tail is gathering knowledge that cannot be gained any other way." Well, I feel like I've been carrying a cat home by the tail this last week. Let's review what I have learned.

Any pencil-necked geek can write something and call it BBS software. There are about 40 BBS software packages listed in the directory that *Boardwatch* publishes every month. But believe me, that's just the beginning. If you start to look at FAQ lists and then look on CompuServe and the Internet FTP sites, there are at least a hundred BBS systems.

When you think about it, it isn't surprising. What does a bulletin board system really have to do, minimally? It has to store and display bulletins. How hard is this? Not hard. The program has to be able to accept text from a phone line, display text (postings) to the user on the other end of the phone line, accept new postings from the user, store the new postings on the disk, and be ready to display the new postings on the same terms as the old postings. It's not rocket science (as if they paid rocket scientists a lot these days), it is simple computer science. Sorting, convenience, multiple modem lines, chat - all of that stuff is not strictly necessary to call your software BBS software.

Now, really, how much of a programmer do you have to be to build a basic system? Not much. It sounds to me like a good project for a second year programming class in college. If you assume you can rip off someone else's code from a freeware posting, it becomes a first-year student project. A piece of cake.

So we have one or two hundred of the things out there in cyberspace. Most of them are awful. Most of them aren't a whole lot more than some glorified e-mail program. But there are some good ones, and they do *scads* of things: multi-tasking, security, packaging for off-line readers, Internet connections, download service, graphic interface support, database support, and a bunch more stuff.

How do you pick? It's hard to say. I haven't succeeded yet. But part of it is taste and part of it is requirements. Part of it is predicting how you and the software supplier are going to get on. Part of it is price. It can be pretty idiosyncratic.

In previous issues of *Boardwatch*, Jack Rickard has stated that he doesn't want to do ratings of BBS software because sysop requirements vary too much. He's right. As a simple example, eSoft's TBBS is probably the most flexible BBS package around, but you have to tell it what you want, you have to negotiate a path through that flexibility. If you

want sysop ease of use and speed of set-up, then it just isn't the right choice. If you want flexibility, it is absolutely the right choice. Other packages have other virtues. It's not like the Olympics where one athlete is the fastest runner. It's more like dating where your buddy might pick someone you can't stand but she suits him just fine.

I can tell you how I am picking. I put together a list of requirements for my system, then I started to compare widely available packages against the requirements list. After I got down to a short list, then I started to call into their boards. I wanted to see how I liked the looks of the board and how I liked the feel of the company. This led to my second observation.

Most BBS software companies don't know how to market their way out of a paper bag. Jeez, a lot of them would be challenged by marketing their way out of a wet Kleenex. I literally don't think one of them has a marketing employee who has spent more than an hour trying to understand where a new, prospective sysop is coming from. Let me give you some examples:

eSoft: I called into their BBS. It is a beautiful board, with very nice use of color. I liked it. But if you don't have a serial number, you can't do any more than get a demo/tutorial of the BBS software. It is a nice demo. It is a beautiful demo. As a matter of fact, the other BBS software companies would do well to emulate it. But there is no way to ask them questions via the BBS. There is no way to send e-mail to eSoft from within their board if you aren't registered as an owner of their software.

Get a clue, eSoft! We are sysops, we are nerds! We are nerds and we like it. We are proud of being nerds. We like doing things via e-mail. We like doing things late at night. If we are prospects for your software, we will probably be calling into your demo board late at night when you don't have any staff to answer our questions. If you don't offer us e-mail, but just terminate the session when the demo is over, we get the feeling that you don't want to talk to us. We get the feeling that you just want us to look at the slicks and then buy. That is a bad feeling for a prospect to have.

Use your pretty software to its full advantage. Let us join your demo system and send e-mail to sales or customer service. Let us read newsgroups on your system. Put an e-mail address in your literature. Sponsor new sysop chat sessions every Sunday night. Get your sales reps online. Use what you got guys!

PCBoard: When I called them, they sent me a nice brochure with a demo diskette. The demo diskette has a demo version of the software on it. To this idea I say "Good move!" I like this idea. But me thinks the marketing

department never tried to use the demo, at home, on their very own computer and printer.

When I got the demo, the first thing that I wanted to do with it was look at the docs. Call me chickens, but I like to read about the software before I install it on my PC. My PC is important to me. I do insignificant little things like make my living with it and I like to know what is going on it before I say OK to the install. Impetuous of me, I know, but that's just the way I am.

But there is no way to get just the documentation off the diskette. You have to do an install, then abort it, then extract the docs from a self-extracting ZIP file and print them. I was a little annoyed at having to do this, but I have been a Unix sys-admin - I can handle it. I killed the install, executed the command they specified, which piped the output of the extraction to the printer, then went downstairs to read to my daughter.

Half an hour later, I came back upstairs to grab the printout. Little did I know that they had put about 500 pages into that ZIP file. Unnumbered pages. Unnumbered monofont pages that all look the same. Big trouble. You see, I have an HP Laserjet 4P. Its output tray holds about 50 sheets on a good day. So, with a 500 page input queue, I had about 50 sheets in the tray, about 150 sheets on the floor and a "needs paper" error message. I had to spend the next hour baby-sitting the printer to get the next 300 pages out of it in reasonable order.

Then I spent another half-hour using more on an ASCII version of the docs and leafing through the 200 unnumbered, unnumbered pages to try and get them in order. I was able to do it, but it annoyed the crap out of me. Using a ream of paper and the better part of a print cartridge didn't make me very happy either. Maybe I am an idiot, I don't think extreme annoyance is the impression you want to leave with your prospects.

Hey! Clark Development! Try to write a short introduction/quick-start manual. Then change your install program so I can print it out and read it before I do a complete install.

Zmax: They have a reasonably cheap (\$695 for up to 4 lines) Unix BBS. If you call these folks, they ship you an information package with some OK brochures, and a demo diskette. The demo is just a PC slide show kind of thing, but that's OK. They sell Unix BBS software and they have ports to about 15 different flavors of Unix. It would be tough to send out a real demo. Expensive, too, because tapes are more common than

floppies in the Unix world, and these are tapes with a \$20 price tag. A DOS demo diskette is the right solution.

I looked at the demo and it seemed reasonable. So, I called into their BBS. If I can't use their software on my machine, I'll try it on their's. Maybe I can download some docs while I am at it. So I call them up, and follow the directions. I give my name, address, fax number, phone number, etc. only to find that they won't activate my account until someone is back in the office. This is usually within 24 hours, but I am writing this in December and they are closed from December 24 to January 2. I won't be able to look at their BBS for about a week.

This is stupid. They don't want to let me use the BBS on my first call? What are they checking for? Drug use? A history of insanity in my family? Are they planning on calling the FBI and running a background check? I am not asking for a handgun; I just want to check out their software. What's the point of the delay? Either they are paranoid or their software can't create accounts on the fly. Either way, change is necessary.

Mustang: What is the deal with their slogan - *The World's Most Popular BBS Software*™? How can you trademark a descriptive term? Do they really have the most popular BBS software? Popular? Popular? Popular in what sense? Most copies sold? Most likely to get asked to the prom? Most dates in one year? Is their slogan meant to just be a weird tagline or is it meant to be a statement of fact? If someone else sells more copies than Mustang's Wildcat, can they mention it without violating Wildcat's trademark? The whole thing is kind of weird. It gives me the willies.

Enough with the marketing stupidity. There are more examples, but it is getting boring. Galaticomm is the only one not doing anything grievously stupid. They have all the following:

- A BBS that allows anyone to become a new user the first time they log in.
- A BBS with an e-mail connection to their customer service department.
- A BBS with detailed information on all of their products.
- You can try out internet related services on their BBS, including reading newsgroups.
- A downloadable demo with short, readable, quick-start guide.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Compuserve has a BBS forum. Type **GO IBMBS** to get to it.

There are at least 2 BBS FAQ lists. The main BBS FAQ covers all operating systems and is available from Compuserve in the IBMBS forum, from AOL in the PC Telecom forum or from the New Jersey Computer Connection. The latter is reachable by modem at 1-609-896-3191. The FAQ can also be FTP'd from pluto.njcc.com in the directory [/pub/bbsfaq](http://pub/bbsfaq). The author, Claire Walters, is available at bbsfaq@aol.com.

There is also a Unix BBS FAQ. It is posted about twice a month to the newsgroups alt.bbs.unixbbs, and alt.bbs. The author, Duane Davis, is available at unixbbs@dsnet.com.

Clark Development sells PCBoard. Voice: 1-801-261-1686; BBS: 1-801-261-4976.

eSoft sells TBBS. Voice: 1-303-699-6565; BBS: 1-303-699-8222.

Galaticomm sells The Major BBS. Voice: 1-305-583-5990; BBS: 1-305-583-7808.

Mustang Software sells Wildcat. Voice: 1-805-873-2500; BBS: 1-805-873-2400.

Zmax sells Xchange. Voice: 1-315-635-1882; BBS: 1-315-635-1947.

- A third-party program for people who market add-ons to the Galaticomm software.

One final observation, then I'll close for the month.

DOS is a stupid operating system for a BBS system. DOS is a single-user, network-ignorant operating system with limited memory capabilities and limited ability to handle multiple serial lines. To use it for a modem-based BBS, the BBS software developer has to either write multi-tasking software or rely on one of the DOS multi-tasking kludges like Desqview. This works as long as BBSs remain modem-based, but we start to get big problems if the communications mode for the BBS begins to move to the Internet. In this environment, you need the multitasker to service WWW connections, telnet connections, FTP connections, modem connections, gopher connections, and heaven knows what else. Making this happen at speeds that will satisfy users on an OS that is meant for one user, has interrupts for only two serial lines, and has no virtual memory facility seems...well, let's just say I wouldn't want to lead the engineering team assigned the problem.

So what operating systems are out there that have multi-user, multi-tasking capability, TCP/IP networking, WWW utilities, virtual memory, and an ability to handle lots of serial lines. Well, there is Unix, and then there is Unix, and oh, yeah, Unix. The problem is that the Unix-based BBS software is just not as advanced as the DOS stuff is. Are we surprised to hear that Galacticom is coming out with a Unix port of The Major BBS? No, we are not. We are relieved. We hope they have a Linux port planned. But Galacticom's Unix port is way, way too expensive. Their minimal PC version is \$259 (2 lines). Compare that price to their minimal charge for a Unix version - \$2995. Yikes! Quite a difference! I can't afford it, I know that. I'll bet you can't either.

If the future of the BBS is the Internet, then we are all going to have to at least think about a conversion to Unix in the next three or four years. I'm hoping for a vendor with a \$1000 Linux-compatible BBS that is even half as flexible as TBBS and includes QWK support, telnet support, FTP support, and WWW support. If they also include utilities to aid in the conversion from a DOS-based BBS to a their Linux BBS, they are going to clean up. ♦

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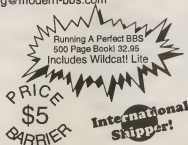
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GADGETS & GIZMOLOGY

by Gary W Funk
Gizmoologist

MAXTOR'S MOBILEMAX DESKRUNNER

Plugging a computer seems to be the buzz word of the month. Computers want to be plugged into this thing, and plugged into that network. I've been there, done that, and got the t-shirt. On the other hand, plugging things into the computer can be as much fun if not more. A visit to a local computer store will show dozens of nifty gadgets that will enhance any computer system. One group of gadgets, that until this year was limited to notebooks, is the PCMCIA (PC Memory Card Industry Association) cards and adapters. If you own a notebook computer, it most likely has a PCMCIA slot in it. And if it does, it most likely has a PCMCIA card. And if it has a PCMCIA card, there might be a time when you want to use it on a desktop computer.

Maxtor Corporation, a leading manufacturer of hard drives, has developed a line of products they call MobileMax. One of these products is the DeskRunner PC Card Drive that allows you to add a PCMCIA slot to your desktop computer. It consists of an interface card that plugs into a 16 bit slot in the computer and a cardslot module that fits in a 3.5" or 5.25" drive bay, some mounting hardware, cables, and software to make it all work.

The DeskRunner supports PCMCIA Type I, II, and III cards and is fully compliant with the PCMCIA 2.1 protocol. It allows the use of PCMCIA network cards, modems, I/O cards, memory cards, and ATA 1.3" and 1.8" hard drives to be used on the desktop computer. It supports most card data formats including the True Flash File System and the Microsoft Flash File System.

DeskRunner also supports a feature called Hot Swap, which allows the insertion and removal of PCMCIA cards while the system is running. This lets the PCMCIA hard drive from a notebook computer plug into the desktop computer with no interruption. Changing PCMCIA cards is much like changing 3.5" floppy disks. If other computers have a DeskRunner installed, a single drive containing several megabytes of data can be moved from computer to computer to update files or continue work. An example would be if there is a document that is being worked on, the drive can be placed in the computer that has a scanner attached to it. The images can be scanned directly to the PCMCIA drive. The complete document can then be moved to another computer to free up the scanner and the work can continue.

Installing the DeskRunner is easy. Plug the cables from the interface card to the card module. Install the module in a drive bay, plug in the interface card, turn on the computer and run the install program. Reboot the computer to load the CardTalk drivers and plug in the PCMCIA card you want to use. You now have instant access to it to any PCMCIA card. The best



reason for installing a DeskRunner on a desktop computer is to access PCMCIA hard drives.

Accessing a hard drive in the DeskRunner is just like accessing any other hard drive. It is assigned a drive letter on boot up and acts much like a floppy drive. The config.sys software drivers necessary to access the DeskRunner took up 56K of memory, leaving only 487K of base memory on my system. That's more than I want to part with as many programs want at least 512K free. But for access to a PCMCIA slot and removable hard drives, I will find a way to free more memory.

What moves this gadget to the top of my list is that this is also one of the best ways to transfer large files from one computer to another whether it is in the same office or a computer across town or in another country.

I tested the MobileMax 171MB hard drive in the DeskRunner. And although I have resisted the need to use my micro screwdriver set and open it up, I did give it a good workout. It does have two platters that rotate at a speed of 4464 rpm. With a 32KB cache it will do burst transfers of 7.5MB per second and a sustained data transfer rate of .5MB per second. It has an average seek time of 16ms and a track-to-track seek time of 4ms. In a real-time test of transferring files, it is almost as fast as the Maxtor 7345 I use.

If you want a new gadget to play with or if you have a notebook with a PCMCIA slot, run, don't walk to your nearest computer store. Get yourself a DeskRunner and MobileMax 171. This is the way to go. ♦

The Maxtor MobileMax DeskRunner PC Card Drive has a suggested price of \$102.

The MobileMax PCMCIA Type III hard drives are \$306 for the 105MB, \$329 for the 131MB, and \$390 for 171MB.

A 262MB drive is to be released soon and the suggested price is to be determined but should be under \$600.

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WEBWATCH

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THOMAS SYSTEM ON THE WEB

by Jack Rickard

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Newt Gingrich

In last November's national election the Republican routed the Democrats in one of the most dramatic electoral upheavals in the history of our republic. In addition to recovering a majority in the Senate, Republicans captured a majority of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, ending a 40 year reign that last saw a Republican majority in 1954. It was essentially a bloodless revolution and the liberals and socialists in Washington have been publicly in tears every day since. Cokie Roberts has aged ten years on camera in three months - it almost looks like time-lapse photography.

Overnight, House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich became the leading candidate for the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and he's been pretty tightly the center of attention each day since. Within a couple of days, we tuned into C-SPAN to listen to Gingrich address a luncheon group in Washington D.C. broadly outlining his "priorities" for the 104th Congress. He noted he saw five broad areas that badly needed to be addressed and went on to describe them. When the FIRST thing he mentioned was electronic access to government we nearly fell out of our chair. Along with welfare reform, tax reform, government spending, budget issues, et al., he was publicly espousing citizen access to government information.

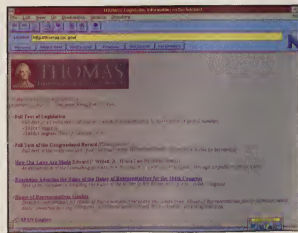
At first we thought he might have dropped his notes on the way into the lunch. But on the day after the opening of the 104th Congress, he testified before the House Ways and Means Committee and AGAIN led the discussion with electronic access. From what we can gather, Speaker Gingrich doesn't think much of Washington D.C. and seems particularly disenchanted with three main groups that seem dedicated to hosing up the works: lobbyists, bureaucrats, and journalists. We think he's on to something.

Apparently, one of the ways he sees fighting this deadly triumvirate of vipers is to give the body politic the same timely access to the same information that the moneyed lobbyists have. He was pretty pointed in his description of putting EVERY House of Representatives document online as part of the filing process, so that ANY interested citizen could electronically access it at the SAME time as the more traditional moneyed lobbyists and journalists. And he's surprisingly consistent in dropping this little bomb right in the middle of discussions of tax cuts, welfare reform, balanced budget amendments, and the line-item veto. Before the House Ways and Means Committee, he even broached the topic, albeit as an example of "creative thinking," of a low-income tax cut for the purchase of laptops. The picture of arming the homeless with IBM ThinkPads sounds a little whacky, but that someone is thinking this way doesn't actually.

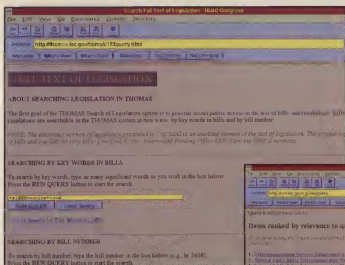
While most of the House Dems seemed determined to rehash every budgetary tradeoff made in Washington for the last 15 years as a holy pact, Gingrich was publicly quoting Alvin Toffler and talking about America's future in a global information economy. We found this kind of talk from a trench politician in the House of Representatives not only surprising, but inspiring.

More so in that he seems dead serious about it in a way we can measure. It's happening. He had that morning returned from the power-on ceremony over at the Library of Congress for a service they had titled THOMAS - with reference to Thomas Jefferson, that would make House information available by Internet.

By way of a shot in the dark, we knew the Library of Congress had been doing some rude stuff at .LOC.GOV. So we tried a connection to <http://www.thomas.loc.gov>. No go. We aimed another blind missile at <http://thomas.loc.gov> and hit a bulls-eye. The service is up and working virtually simultaneously with the opening of Congress (the next day actually).

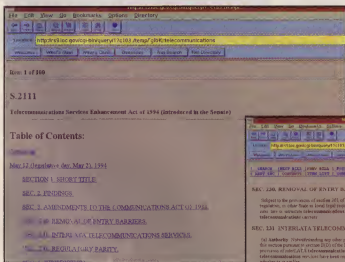


House of Representatives on the Internet



House Bills concerning telecommunications from the 103rd Congress

This was no glitzy tour of the Capitol Building or a series of Newt's favorite political cartoons. The service **ALREADY** had the new House rules up on the service with the nine reforms that had been passed the previous day. More significantly, it had the **FULL** text of **ALL** House bills from the 103rd Congress online with a very useable search engine. We entered the search query "telecommunications" and were stunned to see a detailed listing of almost exactly 100 bills listed on screen. This seemed an extraordinarily high number of telecommunications bills. It was. The search is not just on **TITLES**, but on **FULL TEXT**. Every bill that contained the word "telecommunications" anywhere in it was listed. Better, if you click on a bill, you get the table of contents of the bill in **HTML** format, and then the text of the bill itself in **HTML** format with all the proportional fonts etc. It's beautiful. With our Netscape Browser, click on **PRINT** and it comes rolling out of the printer in very readable form.



Full text of House Bills available in HTML format

The service also provides access to the House Gopher system. This provides a member directory. This was in plain text gopher style, and not pretty. Worse, it was incomplete in some areas - obviously still under construction. But you can get the phone number of anyone in the House, the e-mail addresses of a few (Newt Gingrich is GEORGIA6@HR.HOUSE.GOV), and it promises to list committee assignments etc. in the future.

The system is seminal, and will need enhancement as it goes along - see Jim Warren's column in this issue. But it is already

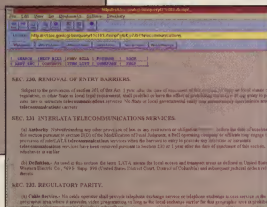
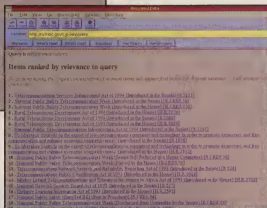
one of the best resources to government information we've seen anywhere, anytime, and it is almost alarming to see something like this in place within weeks in a city that can't even drive home most days that fast. It will be extraordinary to see what impact this has on our democracy now that anyone with a laptop can access proposed laws, in all their voluminous and obnoxious detail, at the same time the dark forces of Washington D.C. can. In the past, by the time we knew anything about it, the battle was mostly over and well-funded and

organized special interests had already had their say. If Newt Gingrich does **NOTHING** else ever in Washington D.C., by eliminating this little grace period of information secrecy, he's already moved the power lever one tiny bit out of the hands of these forces, and into the hands of the citizenry in a very real and demonstrable way.

C-SPAN GOPHER ONLINE PROGRAM GUIDE

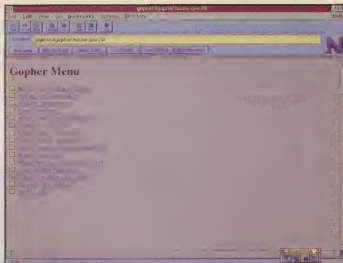
The Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network, C-SPAN was created as a non-profit co-operative entity by the cable TV industry to broadcast proceedings of the U.S. House of Representatives "gavel to gavel." The first broadcast March 19, 1979 reached 3.5 million households and was manned by a total staff of four people. The network was designed to air an unedited, balanced view of government and public policy forums at work, and to provide viewers with direct access to elected officials, decision-makers and journalists. By 1982 it went to 24-hour coverage.

In the nearly 16 years since, the network has expanded to cover a host of things, C-SPAN2 was introduced to cover Senate proceedings, and an incredible group of people nationwide and indeed worldwide have become C-SPAN junkies who think watching politicians hiss and snarl at each other is the best sports coverage and entertainment available anywhere. The network now reaches some 50 million tv households via 4000 cable systems and sports a staff of 180. They also cover a wide variety of global events from the Israeli Knesset to the Hungarian Parliament. You just haven't lived until you've viewed an hour of the British House of Commons.



One unique element of C-SPAN is that it tries to be timely with regards to developing events and coverage - there is basically no programming schedule developed weeks in advance. They cover what comes up politically and legislatively more or less as it happens. So checking out C-SPAN can be a bit of an adventure. But they can tell basically what they intend to cover a day in advance and are actually pretty good at listing what will be aired 12 hours later. They have a voice hotline at (202)628-2205 where you can retrieve today's schedule via touch-tone phone. But we were surprised to learn they also have a C-SPAN Gopher server you can reach via Internet using your web browser at gopher://c-span.org.

The server, while not as visually attractive as a Web server, provides a good deal of information in plain text format, including programming schedules and camera assignments that can be very useful in determining what's on C-SPAN tonight. It also provides a lot of historical information about C-SPAN, an electronic means to make programming suggestions, and even information about job openings and internships with the network. ♦



C-SPAN on the web - gopher://c-span.org

FOUR11 - E-MAIL USER DIRECTORY ON THE WEB

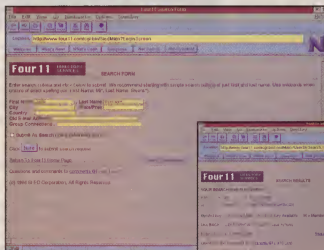
by Jack Rickard

SLED Corporation of Palo Alto California put up an interesting web site this past October titled FOUR11. The service purports to provide an e-mail directory allowing webulists to look up the e-mail address of an individual on the network.

We've done stories in the past on white pages directories. Four11 provides one of the most usable interfaces to such a directory we've seen. But the company has no connection to the InterNIC or other entity to derive a starting database.

According to Mike Satullo of SLED, they wrote a program that scans USENET for news postings with a name and address, and ran this for some time to derive a seed database of some half-million entries. Access to the database is free of charge, but to gain access, you must first fill out a form registering YOUR e-mail address in the database - not hard and a good way to garner more names.

The highly interactive directory is easily searched by e-mail, through the use of e-mail forms, or the Web, by using browsers such as Mosaic or Lynx. A rich collection of search features includes: search by name, search by location, search by old e-mail address, Group Connection, and wildcards.

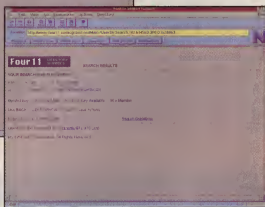


Group Connection is an innovative feature which makes it possible to enter searches for: "Bob at Garden Computers," "Jane in New York City who graduated from Tuckahoe High School," or "Paul who's going to Columbia University."

For a \$20 annual fee, you can also create personal search agents, register your PGP encryption public key, or add a hot link from the database to your own web page.

The service is quite easy to access using a Mosaic type web browser at <http://www.Four11.com/>. You enter your e-mail address and ask for a password. You must fill out a registration screen and then you're given access to the query database. A password is later e-mailed to you and you can use this

SLED Corp's
FOUR11 e-mail
directory
<http://www.four11.com/>



password to logon again later. Actually, WWW security isn't real mature, if you save the location of the query screen to your book marks file, or just save the screen as an HTML file, that will work too.

We found the database engine to be interesting. There is a full form for name, e-mail address, city, state, etc. You can rather flexibly fill out any part of it and attempt a search. You might, for example, just enter the last name and get a listing of all "Jones" in the database. We found it interesting to enter individual cities to see how many entries were listed for the city - kind of a who's online in area x.

We also entered a series of searches for people we knew more or less. Out of a dozen, we hit nine times. It's probably true that many of these people were known USENET addicts. But the impression was that a significant percentage of the people we might want to lookup were listed. Given that the database is barely over

a half-million names, this calls to question the often quoted 20 million Internet users that we've been questioning anyway. If there are that many, this service is persuasive that you don't see most of them around much.

In any event, it doesn't hurt to get listed on such a database and it might cough a needed address on occasion. You can also deal with the database by e-mail at free@sled.com. For further information, contact Mike Santullo, SLED Corporation, Palo Alto, CA; (415)323-2508 voice; (415)326-0730 fax; E-Mail: santullo@sled.com. ♦

WEB SITES

by Hope N. Tillman and Walt Howe

As veteran Internet surfers, we have watched the rapid development of the World Wide Web with great interest. A year ago, most new creative effort on the Internet were going into gopherspace. Today, the place to watch is the World Wide Web. There are new Web sites appearing every day. Some of them are creative and artistic; some of them are dull and routine. Together we manage to keep up with most of the new ones, and we will try to pick out some of the most original and most interesting ones to bring to your attention here.

We won't hesitate to tell you what we find good and bad about them, although our selection process will concentrate mostly on the good ones. One of our purposes will be to mention which ones are valuable both for the Web users with full graphics and those with text-only interfaces.

Our first selection this month is a very timely one. It has only simple, functional graphics, and the text-only user can use this, too. Here is a topic that most of us have to deal with around this time of year, and this web site may be helpful.

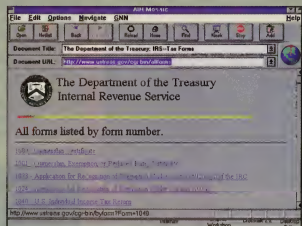
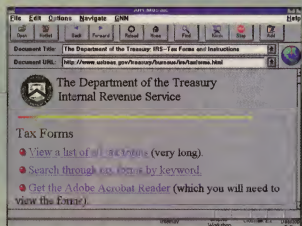
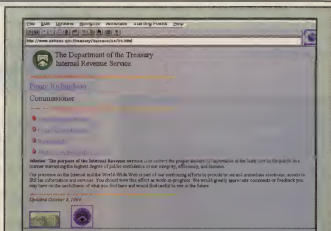
THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE HOME PAGE

It provides you with tax forms, answers to frequently asked questions, and it tells you where to get additional help and where to file. What more could you want? We can't guarantee you a refund but it may make the whole effort a little less painful. And while not all the forms are available, those that are won't run out just before you get there. Point your browser at this URL:

<http://www.ustreas.gov/treasury/bureaus/irs/irs.html>

When you select tax forms from the first screen, you will be able to search by keyword or form number or select from a long list. The text-only browsers will handle this well, as long as they have forms support (the ability to fill in a blank). The forms will not be viewable online for some but can be downloaded to view on a personal computer. The biggest problem with this site is that its instructions are very confusing and incomplete at this writing. We hope that by the time you read this, they will have improved the instructions and made the whole process of retrieving tax forms a bit easier.

Our next selection is of a very different type. This site's strength is not in its local content, but in the way it organizes and points to resources all over the world.

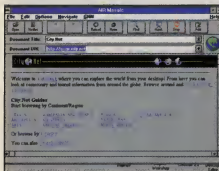


**Internal Revenue Service
on the World Wide Web**
<http://www.ustreas.gov/treasury/bureaus/irs/irs.html>

CITY NET

City Net has pulled together resources of all sorts about geographical and political areas of the World with the primary emphasis on cities. Its links point to such material as the CIA World Factbook and locally developed material of all sorts. If you are planning a trip or just want information about a particular city or region, this is the place to start.

<http://www.city.net/>

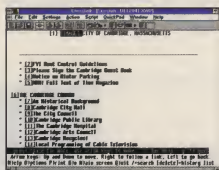


The home page lists the seven continents and major regions of the world. Select the continent or region you want and you are next linked to a list of countries and their maps. If you select a country, you are linked to the next level, which may be states or provinces or the cities themselves. Select a map, and you can point and click to cities or interest areas to call up further information. For example, if you select Antarctica as the continent of choice, it will display a complete map of Antarctica with clickable points of interest on the map.



The text only user can still make use of a lot of information in City Net. Obviously, the text only user cannot click on points on a map, but much of the information is accessible without the graphics, and it is still a valuable resource. See the image of the

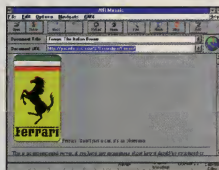
Cambridge, Massachusetts web site, captured from a lynx (text-only) web browser.



Our next selection is for car lovers on the nets. Not many of us can afford both our computers and a dream car, but we can live vicariously by visiting-

FERRARI : THE ITALIAN DREAM

<http://pscinfo.psc.edu/~rsnodgra/Ferrari>



This Web Site has been lovingly assembled by Ryan Snodgrass (rsai@andrew.cmu.edu) for Ferrari owners, real and virtual, to provide a single site for information on Ferrari news, Scheduled Events, a bibliography of magazine articles and publications, a collection of images, lists of worldwide clubs, tech tips, prices of cars, and a who's who of Ferrari owners on the net. For those of us who don't own a Ferrari, we can at least admire the picture collection and be overwhelmed at the costs of the



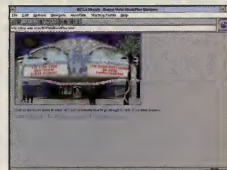
beasts. The heart of the site, for us anyway, is the collection of Ferrari images. Shown are the homepage and one of the images of a vintage Ferrari (1948 Mille Miglia 166 Touring Barchetta).

While our third selection was largely the work and dreams of a single person, our fourth selection is the product of a professional staff. When it comes to putting on a multimedia show, few can top the Disney organization and -

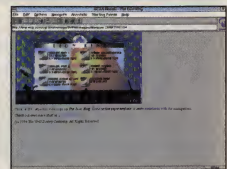
BUENA VISTA MOVIE PLEX

The opening screen's Movie Theater photograph shows a number of current motion pictures produced by Buena Vista up on the Marquee.

<http://bvp.wdp.com/BVPM/MooV Plex.html>



If you click on any of these, it will take you to collections of video and sound clips, still pictures, story summaries, and even a coloring book. For the slow connection or text-only viewer, this well-designed web site provides alternate methods to select and retrieve each of the choices.



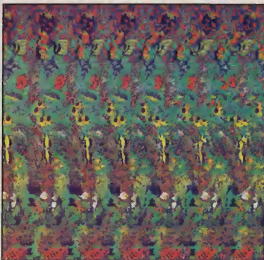
Our fifth and final selection for the month introduces three-dimensional viewing to your computer screen.

There are several sites that have introduced 3-D graphics, but this is one we particularly like:

5-D STEREOGRAMS HOME PAGE

This colorful web site, produced by Blue Mountain Arts, is a commercial venture. It gives you three stereograms that you can view in 3-D right on your computer screen (unless you are one of those people who never manage to see them anyway). They would also like you to order the higher resolution printed versions from them for a fee, and complete catalog and ordering information is included. Point your browser to:

<http://www.ais.net/netmail/bma/>



The picture below, one of their endangered species series, works very well on screen.

The pictures are also downloadable for the text-only user to view offline.

WORDS FOR WANNA-BE WEB WATCHERS

For those of you who want to search for new sites between issues of Boardwatch, here are a few of the many places to check!

The Scout Report from Internic Information Services is a weekly summary of Internet highlights including new sites and resources. It is available in multiple formats.

Via e-mail, send the message "subscribe scout-report" to: "majordomo@is.internic.net".

Point your gopher client to:

[gopher://is.internic.net/Information Services](gopher://is.internic.net/Information%20Services).

Point your web browser to:

<http://www.internic.net/Scout-report/>

For an ongoing discussion of new web sites, subscribe to the New Network Information Retrieval Services listserv, NEWNIR-L. This e-mail accessible resource announces new

web sites, gopher sites, etc. Send the message "subscribe NEWNIR-L Yourfirst-name Yourlastname" to "listserv@itocslivm.csl.it"

Point your web browser to the NCSA Mosaic What's New menu to see announcements of new web sites. This menu tends to be very lengthy.

<http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/Mosaic/Docs/whats-new.html>

There are also a bunch of search tools for the Web, but that's a subject for another issue.

Hope Tillman and Walt Howe are a married couple who met in cyberspace and still enjoy spending time there together. Hope is Director of Libraries at Babson College, a Director of the Special Libraries Association, and an Internet author and consultant. She is the co-author of the book Internet and Special Librarians. Hope's Babson College gopher is well known for its Internet Business Resources menu. Point your gopher or browser to URL <gopher://gopher.babson.edu>. She maintains a comprehensive Internet Bibliography for Internet users. You can reach Hope at e-mail address tillman@babson.edu.

Walt is DELPHI Internet Services' Internet SIG Manager. See the Delphi column for more information about Walt. ♦

PUBLISHING ON THE WEB PART 1

by Micheal Erwin

How many times have you seen a great looking World Wide Web page and wondered how they did that? Well you can do it pretty easily yourself. Over the next few issues we will be covering how to write Hyper Text Markup Language or HTML documents. As you will see, you can publish your own HTML documents and you don't need any fancy editors to get started either. You will need a text editor and WWW browser, e.g. Cello, Mosaic or Netscape. So let's get going.

Most WWW servers will, by default, send an INDEX file if no specific HTML file is requested by the user. We will start with that file, and proceed from there. This file will lead to other links or documents that we make. All HTML files are simple ASCII text. So to create a HTML document start your favorite ASCII text editor. I am going to use the Windows Notepad, not my favorite but it will work.

Since HTML is simple ASCII, it uses TAGs to control how a browser, like Mosaic or Netscape, views that document. A tag is a keyword starting with < and ending in >, e.g. the very first thing in a HTML document is <HTML>, this tells the browser that the text following <HTML> is an HTML document. We could also have used <html> since tags are not case sensitive.

However to make our documents presentable, I recommend using all upper case tags. <HTML> is optional for most browsers, but we will use correct HTML notation in our documents. That way it will be compatible with most browsers, since we don't know what browser will be used in viewing our documents.

After our <HTML> tag, we will title our document with <TITLE>. You can put anything you want after the <TITLE>. (see Listing 1) Notice that you end the title of the document with </TITLE>. This ends the document title. The use of /, ends most of the tags in HTML. Mosaic & Netscape display the title in the browsers title bar, making our document look proper. PLEASE title your documents! and only use <TITLE> & </TITLE> once in an HTML document. This and other things will make your document look more professional. Oh, by the way, I have put the <HTML> & <TITLE> on separate lines just to make it easier to follow. Later, when things start to get complicated it will be easy to read, since HTML tags can sometimes make documents look confusing. As a side note, if you want to generate proper HTML, put a </HTML> tag at the very end of your HTML document.

Now for our first actual information that will be displayed in the body of our document, we will start with <H1>. (see Listing 1) This is a heading tag. The number within the tag stands for the level of the heading. This can be a number ranging from 1 to 6. Text with a <H1> will be displayed with a larger font than

LISTING 1

```
<HTML>
<TITLE>Boardwatch's HTML Tutorial</TITLE>
<H1>Welcome to the Boardwatch HTML Tutorial</H1>
<HR>

This is the first paragraph in our INDEX.HTML file.
I have pressed enter, but as you see, your browser
ignores it, until it sees the Paragraph tag.<P>

The 2nd Paragraph starts here and anytime you want
to start<P>another<P>paragraph use <P> tag.

<HR>
<H2>Line Breaks</H2>
Boardwatch Magazine<BR>
5970 South Vivian Street<BR>
Littleton Colorado 80127-9929<BR>
<HR>
<H2>Text Formatting</H2>
<B>This line is bold</B><BR>
<I>This line is italic</I><BR>
<B><I>This line is both bold and italic</B></I><P>
<I>You can also mix <B>characteristics</B> during a sentence</I><P>
<HR>
<H2>Various Types of Lists</H2>
<P>
<H3>Unnumbered Lists</H3>
<UL>
<LI> Item 1
<LI> Item 2
</UL>
<P>
<H3>Sub Lists</H3>
<UL>
<LI> Item 1
<UL>
<LI> Sub item a
<LI> Sub item b
</UL>
</UL>
<LI> Item 2
</UL>
<HR>
<H3>Ordered/Numbered Lists</H3>
<OL>
<LI> Item 1
<LI> Item 2
</OL>
<P>
<H3>Sub Lists</H3>
<OL>
```

```
<LI> Item 1
<OL>
<LI> Sub item a
<LI> Sub item b
</OL>
<LI> Item 2
</OL>
<HR>
<H2>Preformated Text</H2>
<PRE>
```

DREAM Company

ITEM	Description	Price
1	6x CD-ROM	200.00
2	3gb Hard Drive	349.95
Total		549.95

```
</PRE>
<H2>HyperText Links to other Documents</H2>
<P>
If you would like to view this documents HTML
source, please click <A HREF="RAW.HTM">here</A>
to see it<P>
Click <A HREF="SOURCE/ANOTHER.HTM">right here</A> to
view another HTML file.<P>
<HR>
<H2>Uniform Resource Locators</H2>
<P>
<A HREF="http://www.mountain.net/sample/index.html">Sample</A> -
Index File at www.mountain.net<P>
To see the current weather map click <A
HREF="http://sdfsdf.sdfsdf/Lsa.gif">here</A>.<P>
<A HREF="telnet://access.mountain.net">TELNET</A> to the host
Access at Mountain Net.<P>
FTP to <A HREF="ftp://sunsite.unc.edu">sunsite.unc.edu</A>.<P>
<HR>
<H2>Named Anchor Links</H2>
<P>
When you click on <A HREF="#JUMPHERE">this link</A> the browser
will jump to the named anchor later on in the document.<P>
<P>
Which is way down <A NAME="JUMPHERE">here</A>.<P>
<HR>
<I>Last updated December 5, 1994<BR>
&#169; 1994 by Boardwatch Magazine</I>
</HTML>
```

a <H2>. A <H2> will be displayed in a smaller font than <H1>, but a larger font than a <H3>. You get the picture. So a <H6> will be REALLY SMALL! You need to be aware that with some browsers, the user can define what font and size is used with each heading tag. Notice that just like <TITLE></TITLE> the <H1> also has a </H1>. This turns off the heading tag. As a side note, don't change the default font settings on your browser. That way you will see the document as everyone else will see it. I have seen people use a <H4> or smaller because of either using a low screen resolution or small font setting.

To see what this actually looks like with your browser, save the document as "INDEX.HTM" if on a DOS based PC, "INDEX.HTML" on anything else. Now launch your browser, do not close your text editor. I am going to use Netscape as my browser, just because I like it. Once your browser is running open the file "INDEX.HTM". The browser should look something like Figure 1. You can use this combination of a text editor and browser to view the changes you make to the HTML document. You can do this by saving your changes in the editor & pressing the document reload button on the browser, to see any changes that you have made. Go ahead and try it. Try changing the <H1></H1> to <H4></H4>.

Did you also notice that the ending tag acts like a newline in your document? Try putting <H4> before "Boardwatch" & </H4> after it. Press the reload button on the browser to see what happens to the text.

One of the simplest things to do in HTML is put a Horizontal Rule line in a document. This is used to break up the document. To do this use <HR>. (see Listing 1) This will put a single line across the page on the browser. Save the "INDEX.HTM" and reload it on the browser. (see Figure 1) See what I mean. When using <HR> you don't use an ending tag to stop it. If you change the size of your browser, the header text formatting and the rule line automatically change to match the new dimensions of the browser.

Let us continue to put info into our document. Notice in Listing 1 that after <HR> I entered some text. Use <P> to mark the end of the paragraph. Otherwise the browser ignores the enter and continues like nothing happened. But notice in the second paragraph I have put several <P> tags in the same line. Each time your browser sees <P> it starts a new paragraph. The one thing to remember about <P> is to use it when you want to end a paragraph or to insert a blank line. Try changing your "INDEX.HTM", save it and reload it in to your browser. (Figure 1) Another somewhat similar tag is
.
 stands for Break line. This doesn't insert the extra space like the <P> tag does. I will use
 in some places instead of <P> for better formatting, when needed. (Figure 2)

By now, you probably want to start making your text stand out a little. You have two more tags and <I>. turns bold formatting on. turns bold off. With that in mind guess what <I> does? Right, turns on italics. And of course </I> turns it off. Look at Listing 1 and try that in your HTML document. Notice also that I put a <P> at the end of each line, otherwise it would have run together, and we don't want that. As you can also see you can mix and <I> in the same text. (see Figure 2) This will add a little pizzazz to your documents.

This leads us to the need of generating lists in our documents. You have several choices: for Unnumbered List and Ordered/Numbered Lists. Let's break down first. (see Listing 1) We start with the , unnumbered List. Then use to start each Listed Item. to turn off the list. Notice that there is no to turn off the Listed Item . The next acts like the termination. (see Figure 3) If you need to do multiple paragraphs in a section use the <P> tag. works the same, except instead of a bulleted list, the browser displays numbers starting with 1. Try using to bring out specific

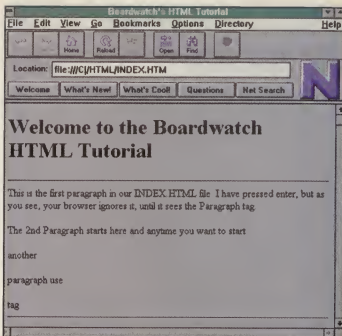


Figure 1

points in your document in a certain order. to turn off the list. (see Figure 4)

As you can see in listing 1, you can make nested lists to bring out sub points to the Listed Item. Try making a nested list in unnumbered list, , and Ordered List, . Just so that you know, if you make a nested list with several levels of sub points. Some browsers will change the type of bullets used. For example Mosaic will display a filled circle for level 1, a hollow circle for level 2, and level 3 uses squares. Whereas Netscape just uses filled circles for levels 1 and 2, then switches to squares for level 3. Go figure?

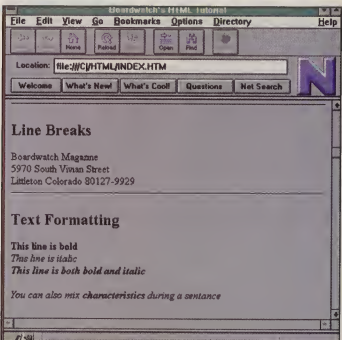


Figure 2

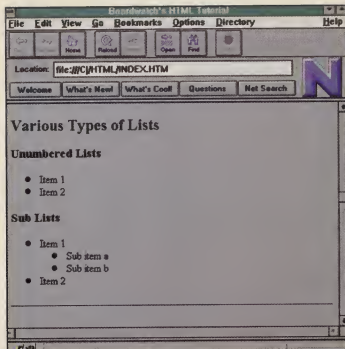


Figure 3

Now that you have some of the basic text formatting tags, somewhere down the road you will want to put preformatted text into an HTML document. When preformatted text is turned on with `<PRE>`, your browser will display the text just as it is in your HTML document. Look at **listing 1**, notice the table that is imported from a spreadsheet. All the spacing is retained. `<PRE>` & `</PRE>` are great for displaying imported database or spreadsheet files. If any HTML tags come in between `<PRE>` and `</PRE>`, they will be displayed as raw ASCII text, (normally) That's why they call it preformatted text. The one thing about preformatted text is that your browser will not automatically adjust the text to view it all. If your preformatted text goes off to the right side of your browser, you will get a scroll bar

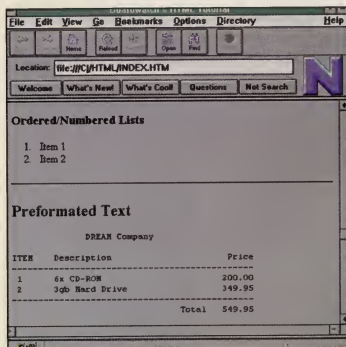


Figure 4

across the bottom of the browser. Use this scroll bar to see all of the preformatted text. By now you have probably noticed that if you put extra spaces at the beginning of a HTML line or within a HTML line, the browser ignores them. Unless it is `<PRE>`-formatted. (see **Figure 4**)

Since we are working with Hyper Text Markup Language, let's add some Hyper Text links to other documents. Adding links to a document requires a 2 part tag. It requires an anchor and a hypertext reference. The anchor starts out with `<A>`. (There is a space after the A). We then specify the hypertext reference with `HREF="filename.ext">`. (See **listing 1**) After the HREF's right angle bracket: `>`, we put the text or image filename that will serve as the hypertext link to another document or file.

In **listing 1**, notice that "here" is the link to the file "RAW.HTM". The browser will change the format of "here" to be underlined and the color to blue. This might be different depending on the browser used. And once you have text for a link, use `` to turn off the anchor. You can then continue text.

You can link documents in other directories by specifying the relative or absolute directory path from the current document to the linked document. In **listing 1** you will see that if you click on "right here," the WWW server will change the directory to source and direct your browser to use "ANOTHER.HTM". This is a relative link. That is to say, that if you were already in a subdirectory "TEMP" the browser would request "/TEMP/SOURCE/ANOTHER.HTM". You could also use an absolute pathname. To do an absolute link, use ``. This means that if you were in "TEMP" directory, the browser would request "/SOURCE/ANOTHER.HTM".

In my humble opinion you should use relative pathnames whenever linking related documents. That way if you decide to move your files you will not have to edit each HTML document.

The Web uses a device called Uniform Resource Locators or URLs to point to items on other WWW servers. URLs will also tell you what type of "resource" you will be linking to. The various types of "resources," called schemes, are:

file or ftp = a file on your local system or a file on an anonymous FTP server

http = a file on a WWW server somewhere

gopher = a file on a Gopher server

WAIS = a file on a WAIS server

news = a link to a USENET newsgroup

telnet = a TELNET connection

mail = start an E-Mail message to someone.

The syntax of URLs is:

scheme://host.domain.name[:port]/path/filename.ext

The port number is normally omitted unless someone tells you to use a specific port number. For example a WWW server normally listens on port `:80` but sometimes is set to use port `:8080`. Here is a few examples of how to link to other resources. (see **Figure 5**)

http://www.mountain.net/ - This URL will make a HTTP connection to MountainNet's WWW server. And since we did not specify a document, it will send us **INDEX.HTML**.

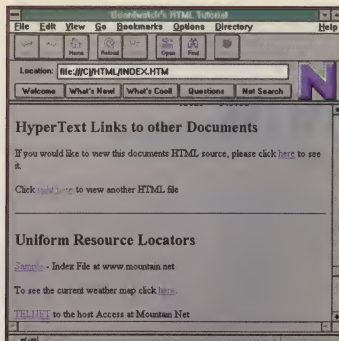


Figure 5

telnet://access.mountain.net/ - This URL will launch a TELNET client, and will try to make a TELNET connection to access.mountain.net.

ftp://unsite.unc.edu/pub/Linux/NEW.html - Makes an FTP connection to unsite.unc.edu, goes into the directory /pub/Linux, and retrieves the file NEW.html.

gopher://gopher.mountain.net/ - This URL will retrieve from gopher.mountain.net, the first gopher page.

news://comp.infosystems.www.users - Will cause the browser to request comp.infosystems.www.users from your news (NNTP) server.

Notice in **Listing 1**, that one of the links is not a HTML document, but a JPEG image. That image will be downloaded to your browser, and depending on your browser, may spawn an external viewer, like LVIEW. The browser might have the capabilities to view the image internally. You could also send plain text, images, MPEG or QuickTime movies and sound files, like WAV and AU. With URLs, only the link is on your Web site. The actual data or file will be retrieved from anywhere in the world. This gives WWW its power. This is the Hyper of HTML. With your ability to link to other sites or pass the WWW browser off to another site, without having the data replicated on your site, makes your site seem to provide data and be more beneficial. Which will probably mean your site will be added to the WWW browsers hotlist or bookmark.

Most HTML documents are small, but depending on your application you might want to have links to different areas in the same document. For example, you might have a huge list in alphabetic order and want to provide an index to the rest of the document. To see what I am talking about open URL:

http://www.ic.gov/94fact/fb94toc/fb94toc.html

The CIA's 94 World Fact Book. Notice how they have A - Z as links to the start of each section of the countries list. If you click on U, it will take you to the section starting with Uganda. Cool, huh?

Well, you can do the same thing by using anchors and a hyper-text reference. I will use a named anchor. `` is an example of a named anchor. When the `` link is clicked on it will go to the bottom of the same document. Just like other links, you will use `` to turn off the links. See **Listing 1** & **Figure 6**.

Now if you want to get creative with named anchors, you can link specific areas of other documents. This can be done with ``. This will link to OTHER.HTML and jump to the section named PARTB.

Earlier did you notice that I said that a Hyper Reference could be text or an image? Well you can do something like this:

```
<IMG SRC="BRDWATCH.GIF" ALT="Boardwatch Header GIF">
```

This will display the IMAge BRDWATCH.GIF on your graphical web browser, right in the HTML document, unless your browser is text based, e.g. LYNX. Then it will display (Boardwatch Header GIF) as ALTernative text to the inline image. For proper HTML documents, you should use ALTernative text with any image in your document.

For something to think about, look at this line:

```
<A HREF="PAGE2.HTML"><IMG SRC="RIGHTARRO.GIF" ALT="NEXT"></A>
```

This will display RIGHTARRO.GIF in the document or the ALTernative text "NEXT". This will make the inline image a Hyper link to the document PAGE2.HTML. When you click on the image or the text shown in the browser, it will load PAGE2.HTML into the browser. This adds a nice touch to your HTML documents.

How is that for a teaser to next month's issue. For an example of how you would use this, take a look at the URL: <http://www.mountain.net/ttc/>. So now you know how HTML writers do some of those cool things in HTML.

We will start a detailed tutorial of WWW graphics in our next issue. In it we will cover inline images, button bars - both text and graphics, headers & menus. Where and how to get those cute little icons. Converting plain old GIFs to transparent and interlaced formats for a professional look. And all around polishing up your HTML documents with additional tags, like the one at the end of **Listing 1** & **Figure 6**. ♦

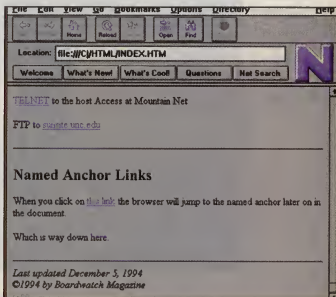


Figure 6



PEOPLE ONLINE by Phyllis Phlegar

THE EXCHANGE OF POWER

Phyllis Phlegar is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and also holds a private pilot's license. She is a freelance announcer and her work can be heard on Business Radio Network, National Public Radio and the Armed Forces Radio Network. Phyllis is currently working on a book to be published by Addison Wesley Publishing Company.

Write to Phyllis, at XHBG67A on Prodigy, P.Phlegar on GENie, Phlegar on Delphi, P Phlegar on AOL, 71562.407 on CompuServe or at phyllis@cris.com on the Internet.

In 1987, I was tired of being afraid to fly, and (when I did fly) having my own monogrammed airsickness bag. So to make a long story short, I ended up in the office of a small flight school out in the county. I soon found out how expensive proposition flight lessons were going to be, but within a few months, the owner of the school said if I'd work for him as one of his traffic reporters, he'd have me fly with an instructor and make sure that I'd get my license. It took awhile to get all the details straight and agree on a salary, but finally, the day had come for me to meet my instructor, Jim.

I was actually dreading this meeting, thinking of how I'd be trapped in a tiny two-seater, Cessna 152 with a total stranger who could end up being a total male chauvinist jerk. One thing I didn't expect was that he'd be so young...Jim looked 15...but I was assured he was 18, and fully qualified to be an instructor and he knew it.

Apparently, most observers expected this pairing of a 34-year-old female and 18-year-old male to be a total bust; both of us had egos that preceded us.

To the surprise of everyone, we got along famously and were soon known for going off on excursions and adventures in the sky, getting into trouble and having a lot of fun. Some people even thought we might be doing more than just flying around. But we were literally just friends, even if no one, including us, understood why. We were so different, and both rather headstrong. It wasn't until very recently that I figured out why we did get along and it's thanks to some of the more unconventional folks I've met online.

I like to go into chat areas and let others online start a conversation with me. One fellow, whose nickname was something like "The Dominator" had a strange bio, concerning his search for..."slaves."



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Enhanced CD-ROM support	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Incoming FAX support	Yes	No	No	No	No
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Bidirectional file transfers	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
DOS door support	11 types	2 types	2 types	No	No
FILE.ID.DIZ support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Yes	No
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Real-time configuration	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

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What he told me was that he was looking for females willing to relinquish power, in this case cyber-sexually, to him. I assumed he was looking for wimpy women with no self-esteem and who were desperate for attention and would feed his need for power and control. It sounded "sadomasochistic," and I suppose it was, but, I actually didn't understand that whole scene. He tried to explain that these activities were only done because both parties wanted it, and that the "submissive" (or sub) was usually someone with a lot of personal power and responsibility in her/his job, and life in general...someone who wanted someone else, someone she/he trusted, to take control of her/his sexuality. It sounded weird to me. The Dominator told me to read a book called "Differnet Loving." I thought, yeah, later for that.

Later...I was in a bookstore and just out of curiosity, I asked if they had such a book. They did and it was not what I expected. It was a genuinely informative near-encyclopedia about consensual dominance and submission, sometimes without any sexual interaction. What happens with people involved in the true philosophy of sadomasochism (nowadays more gently referred to as dominance and submission or s/m) is a consensual exchange of power...and when done according to the true culture of s/m, puts the responsibility on the "dom" to meet the needs, and make happy, the "sub"...because this power shift is a gift, from the sub to the dom, and done with trust and affection. Then the dom agrees to meet the needs of the sub; the dom is charged with great responsibility bundled in that gift of power.

Many boss/employee relationships are consensual exchanges of power...you respect your boss, you do what they say and they are sensitive to your needs. If for example, a boss misuses this "power" we all know what happens...unhappy employees looking for another job.

I was fascinated by the whole concept, sexual and non-sexual, and the only place I could fully research the questions I had, with a minimum of fuss was of course online...where I could easily and anonymously poke around and see how things really were between people who recognized

power exchange relationships and made them a part of their lives.

You can find d/s groups online everywhere, but the one that caught my eye and held my attention the longest was The English Palace. "The Palace" or "EP" has an Internet gateway and I telnetted in, with their address, palace.com. Because I wanted unlimited, day or night access, I used my CRIS/BBS Direct account, which at \$30 a month, wouldn't leave me broke if I spent a lot of time in the Palace...which I did.

Before I could be a member with freedom of the palace, the sysop, Master Charles, voice verified that I was a female. The voice verification insures that the men (who do pay a membership fee to EP) are actually talking to grown women. Men pay \$10 a month, \$60 for six months or \$100 a year for English Palace membership.

Charles started English Palace five years ago because of a combination of his own interest, and more importantly, his inability to find any other BBS that involved d/s that he liked...they weren't "user friendly" and the sysops didn't seem to be into or know what the "scene" was all about - didn't know what d/s people were looking for. He was uncomfortable so he figured other people were too.

Charles said that most people have a definite misconception about d/s, that it causes actual pain for the submissive. He says he could NEVER hit someone because of respect for his partner, and people in general. But he can spank them...if they've asked...because he says "There is a big difference between an abusive husband and someone asking for a spanking because it's consensual and it's not being done out of anger, or frustration...it's being done for enjoyment on both sides. People involved in this on a REAL basis are very sensitive to each other's feelings and don't believe in pushing people to do anything."

I told Master Charles of my interest in power exchange relationships, and though he specifically forbade me to write about anyone without their consent, he said to go online and get to know some of the regulars, and not to worry about being pestered. Charles told me that he reprimands

men for jumping women for c-sex...guys find out real quick that they won't get far with that kind of behavior on EP.

Everyone was very polite, the atmosphere was very casual and there were almost no blatant requests for instant c-sex over the next six weeks. My "bio" said I was very inexperienced about d/s and was looking for people to talk to. It was amazing how many people just wanted to give advice, or talk about their philosophy on d/s. Most said the same kinds of things, such as: the doms were lucky to have strong subs, that such trust was a gift, and so on. It didn't matter who I spoke with or where in the world (such as Europe, the Mid-East or Pacific Rim), most everyone had the same basic rules about trust, and consent.

I came away feeling that I'd made a few friends with some very honest people who knew who they were, and what they wanted...people who understood respect and consensual exchanges of power.

I also noticed that Charles spends a lot of time online talking about safety, and promoting his BBS's in-person bondage and safety workshops to teach people how to play without hurting someone. Charles said "You're not here to hurt somebody, but unfortunately, that's the image most people see, that we're here to mame or do some crazy stuff when in fact that's the furthest thing from our minds. Everything - anything else is abuse. There really is a difference."

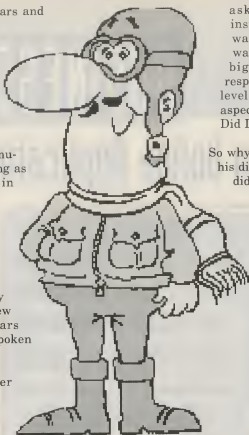
What I found in the English Palace was true elsewhere, for example The Power Exchange BBS (tp.e.ds.ncm.com) and the d/s areas on the national services. The real "d/s scene" was not what I'd originally thought at all...it was about trust and respect, not pain, and not necessarily sex.

Now I understand my relationship with Jim, my flight instructor. Early in our lessons, I came to respect him as a pilot and a teacher, so I consented to him being completely in charge. Jim, in turn, took the responsibility very seriously, and made sure my needs...to get my license and be a good pilot...were met. As a result, the near impossible happened; I did get my license, but mainly because Jim

personalized the training to suit my fears and stomach...and he was constantly asking me if I'd been studying, constantly quizzing me, testing my piloting abilities and somehow making it all a lot of fun, even if my brain did hurt by the end of the day. When we weren't flying, we were on the phone talking about flying, the weather, or anything. He even put a CB radio in my car so we could communicate that way too, early in the morning as we both drove to the airport. Now I'm in the process of getting him online.

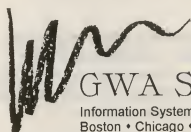
I have this great photo of Jim and me, and of the plane we logged most of our hours together, but I didn't want to use it unless it was okay with him. I was able to locate his mother, and asked her to give him my phone number. When he called me a few days later, it had been over four years (and thousands of miles) since we'd spoken and it was like nothing had changed.

But something had...Jim was no longer the kid, he was now an adult with the responsibilities of a husband and father, and he understood himself better and now, I could actually



ask him, was I right about our instructor/student relationship? Who was in charge, I asked him. Yes, he was, he admitted. Did he consider it a big responsibility, his consensual responsibility to teach me, and on some level, an honor to take control of that aspect of my life? Yes, all true, he said. Did I listen to him? Yes, I did.

So why did we talk for four hours, and on his dime, I might add? He wanted to, (as did I), and by this time, I knew to just enjoy myself, and once again let Jim call the shots. ♦



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TECHNOLOGY FRONT

by Jim Thompson
Western News Service

OS/2 WARP: IBM GETS IT RIGHT

The newest release of OS/2, called Warp, is proof of the old saying, "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again." This time, the trying, the work and the waiting were all worth the effort. OS/2 Warp is here and it was certainly worth the wait.

I was never much of a fan of OS/2 in the past. If you could ever get one of them installed, the first versions didn't work very well.

Succeeding versions had problems with compatibility with earlier versions and many Windows applications which ran in enhanced mode wouldn't run at all or didn't run properly. All that has changed.

OS/2 Warp (version 3) finally delivers everything that IBM has been saying about this operating system. Installation is a breeze, its 32-bit address-ability provides access to the full power of your system, its memory management accesses all available memory, it supports DOS, Windows and OS/2 applications and the suite of included Internet programs finally takes the pain out of using this vast resource for the first time user.

EASY INSTALL

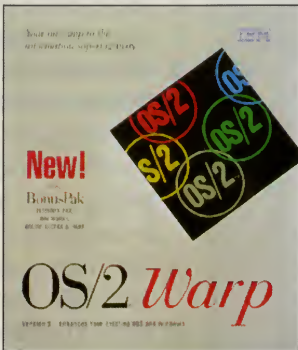
I was impressed immediately with the ease of installation, at least with the CD-ROM version. The system was up and running within 15 minutes of tearing the shrink wrap off the box.

OS/2 Warp is also available on 3 1/2-inch diskettes, but considering the number required you would probably find yourself swimming in a sea of plastic if you go this route. From 35 to 50 MB of disk space are needed for the core program with another 30 MB required for the Bonus Pack programs. With this many files, the chances of one of the diskettes going bad is very high.

You can elect to install only some of the program or uninstall some of them later if you need the disk space or if you are not using certain features.

The installation program also interrogates your system and loads portions of the operating systems depending on available resources. For example, if you have only 4 MB of RAM available, it will install using VGA as the default display adapter and exclude multimedia features to minimize the operating system's working set size. Also, since installation takes place in a working version of the Workplace shell, you can begin using the help files and tutorial before the installation is even complete.

You will also find expanded device driver support, including support for most video cards, SCSI drivers and PCMCIA devices. With OS/2, you can hot-swap PCMCIA adapters without the need to power-off or



IBM's OS/2/Warp v.3

reboot your machine. An auto launch facility allows for an application to be run when a certain type of PCMCIA card is inserted. For example, a comm program will be run when a modem card is inserted.

FULL DOS, WINDOWS AND OS/1 SUPPORT

Once loaded, OS/2 delivers a slick, easy-to-use 32-bit object-oriented GUI. The interface is reminiscent of Windows and/or the Macintosh in that it uses icons and folders. Generally, double-clicking on an icon runs the associated program. To make frequently used programs more accessible, IBM has added a "LaunchPad" from which these programs can be run. This "quick-access" LaunchPad can be resized, displayed horizontally or vertically or allowed to "float" on the desktop.

OS/2 goes a step further than Windows when it comes to support for DOS and Windows programs. Using what it calls VDM (Virtual DOS Machine) OS/2 allows you to have separate DOS device driver configurations and even AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files for each DOS session. Windows applications that cause problems can be isolated into private sessions which can then be multitasked.

A fast load option makes loading Windows applications under OS/2 nearly as fast and efficient as under Windows 3.1 itself. A number of diagnostic and maintenance functions have also been added. These include a boot-up menu that lets you restore previous system

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configurations so you can "undo" a configuration change that may have caused a problem with the system operation or with the boot-up sequence. This is an important addition for laptop users who may attach their machine to a docking station at times. The selected configuration can be invoked at boot time.

You will also find increased multimedia support in version 3. Included is support for Photo CD and a number of the more popular video overlay cards like WIN/TV from Hauppauge Computer Works, Inc. You can playback Autodesk Animator FLC and FLI files and there is support for ADPCM compressed audio (from Microsoft and Interactive Multimedia Association) and MPEG (Motion Picture Experts Group) compressed video.

INTERNET BONUS

If all the new additions to OS/2 don't convince you to give this operating system a second chance, the Internet tools should do it. This is the first intelligent approach to accessing the data highway I have seen. It makes surfing the Internet as easy as hanging ten over your back porch.

Although the installation of the operating system itself was smooth, the same was not true for the Internet programs. The Internet programs are part of the Bonus Pack which includes a CompuServe manager, HyperACCESS Lite, IBM Works, FaxWorks, Person-to-Person (for sharing information with others) and a Multimedia Viewer.

All of these bonus items installed without problems, with the exception of the Internet tools. It started fine, but quickly came to a grinding halt. At this point, I figured the honeymoon was over. Just when I was beginning to really become attached to this new operating system, it let me down. I braced myself for the dreaded call to technical support. I remembered a call I made several years ago to ask about version 1.2 of OS/2. After trying for hours to get through, I was FINALLY greeted with the response, "what's OS/2?"

This time, things were definitely different. The people at IBM technical support were both accessible and knowledgeable. It took about 10 minutes to get through. Best of all, the tech rep not only had heard of OS/2, but actually answered all my questions.

I was not entirely happy with the answer he gave me about the installa-

tion of the Internet utilities, however. He said it was probably a problem with a "mis-alignment" of my CD-ROM drive. The only solution was to send me out a set of diskettes from which I could load the programs. I tried the installation on another machine with the same results, so I personally doubt that it was a problem with the drive. But, it made little difference. As promised, the diskettes arrived via UPS overnight the very next day. It took only about 10 minutes to load the programs from the new diskettes.

The Internet connection provides single-click access to a SLIP (Serial Line Internet Protocol) line from your Internet provider along with an array of navigation tools including Gopher, FTP, Telnet, Mail, NewsReader and an excellent Web Explorer. Best of all, because of the multitasking abilities of OS/2, you can run all of these at one time. So, while you are downloading files from a Gopher site (or even multiple sites) you can be reading your e-mail, checking out the latest news or crawling the Web.

You don't even have to worry if you don't have an Internet provider. The Internet connection software comes pre-configured to use the IBM Global Network. If you want to use this net, all you do is click the box marked "Register," answer the standard questions such as your mailing address and credit card number, and you're in.

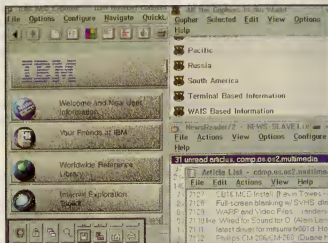
On the first call, any needed programs are automatically downloaded. In my case, this included information on the IBM Customer Assistance Program, a list of access phone numbers in the United States and overseas (local numbers are available in over 90 countries) and an updated modem list.

WEBEXPLORER & THE IBM NET

I had a SLIP connection to the IBM net before I even realized what was happening. From here I was free to explore the many resources of the net using gopher, FTP, telnet and the WebExplorer. Like Mosaic, a cute little icon in the upper right corner of the

WebExplorer moves when anything is actually taking place. Instead of a turning world, this one looks like colored blocks passing as you drive the electronic highway. Functionally, it is also very much like Mosaic.

One of the things I especially like is the ability to click on an icon (a hand with thumbs up and a plus sign) and have the current page you are viewing added to a "quicklist." Any item on the "quicklist" can be accessed later by simply clicking on it. The program records the title of the page and its URL. It's a great way to quickly build a list of your favorite Web haunts.



OS/2 Warp's Web Explorer

The WebExplorer did not come with my package, since it was not even available until the end of November. However, future OS/2 packages will include this program. I got mine directly from the Internet. Once connected, a single click of an icon downloaded the program, automatically unzipped and installed it.

When you call into the IBM net, you are immediately taken to the IBM home page (<http://www01.ny.us.ibm.net>). If you have not used the Web in the past, this is a good place to start. Here you will find an extensive list of topics including entertainment, news, travel, computer related items and services, games and, of course, information about IBM products. There is even a topic titled "Internet Exploration Toolkit" which contains such things as the WebCrawler, WWW Nomad, BBC's Internet Search Interface and the World Wide Web Worm.

There is a \$35 sign-up fee for the IBM Net. After that, you are charged \$12.95 per month for six hours of usage. For \$29.95 per month, you get 30 hours of

usage. Additional time is billed at \$3 per hour for local access and \$6 per hour for 800 number access.

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

Three other communications tools are included as part of the IBM Information Superhighway package shipped with OS/2 Warp. Included are: a CompuServe Information Manager (CIM), HyperACCESS Lite and FaxWorks for OS/2.

CIM provides a graphical interface for navigating through CompuServe which is quite similar to WinCIM. The OS/2 version, however, adds a searchable message database. This allows you to download forum messages and search through or read them off-line. The interface is easy to use and adds a new dimension to this essentially text-based service.

HyperACCESS Lite is a basic terminal program which includes ANSI and DEC VT terminal emulations with auto detection, Xmodem, Ymodem, Zmodem and Kermit transfer protocols and support for more than 250 modems. The phone book comes pre-configured for the most popular online services including ATT Mail, BIX, Delphi, Dow Jones, Genie and MCI Mail. FaxWorks for OS/2 offers all the major tools needed for sending, receiving, reading and printing faxes.

In the BonusPak, you will also find IBM Works, which includes a word processor, spreadsheet, chart package, database, report writer and personal information manager. All of the programs are fully integrated and allow for drag & drop capabilities. For example, you could highlight cells from a spreadsheet and drop the information directly into a document in the word processor. Person

to Person for OS/2 allows multiple network users to share a single, virtual drawing board on which they can exchange ideas or work on the same application.

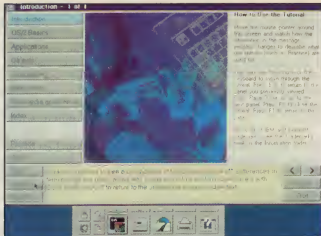
OS/2 VS. WINDOWS95

Along with a stack of press material I received from IBM, was one that I found curious. It is a comparison of OS/2 and Windows95. I say curious because Windows95 has not even been released. Yes, it has been in beta testing for some time, but as far as I know it is not yet ready for release (at least it wasn't at the time of this writing). It seems a bit unfair to poke holes into a product that the authors have said is still in development.

Essentially, IBM claims that Warp beats Windows95 on all major fronts including Architecture, Application Environments, Multitasking Characteristics, User Interface, Multimedia Support and Bundled Applications. I have not seen Windows95, so I can't say if this is true or not. It may be true, but it is also possible that this could change dramatically following the final release of Windows95.

CONCLUSIONS

Before now, I never liked OS/2. It promised a lot, but came with so many problems and liabilities that it seemed hardly worth the effort. When OS/2 Warp arrived on my desk, I fully expected to hate it also. I even tried to hate it. I threw everything I could think of at it, in the very hope that it would crash, proving once again, what I had always known - that this operating system is more flash than substance. But I couldn't make it crash. It passed all my tests with flying colors and made a believer out of me.



OS/2 Warp's tutorial with Windows95 comparison

Yes, I like this new 32-bit, multitasking, multithreaded operating system. It's easy to install. It's easy to use and extremely stable (it's nice not to see the "stack overflow" messages so often common under Windows 3.1).

Version 3 of OS/2 will also operate in as little as 4 MB of RAM. However, for any serious work, I recommend at least 8 MB of RAM. As is always the case with RAM - the more the better.

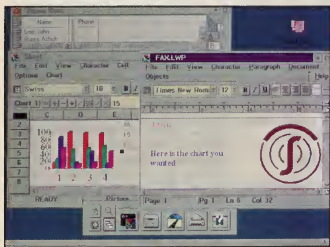
The Internet tools are wonderful. If you have been reluctant to travel the electronic highway, the OS/2 package provides an easily accessible on-ramp.

Two versions of OS/2 Warp are available. One is for users who already have DOS or Windows (Retail cost: \$129). The second, "fullpack" edition, is for users who do not have Windows (Retail cost: \$199).

With a street price of about \$70 for the version that does not include Windows, OS/2 is a bargain that deserves your attention.

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DR. BOB by Bob Rankin

WORKING WWWONDERS WITH E-MAIL

The World-Wide Web (sometimes called WWW or W3) is a collection of documents strung together by "hypertext" links. This means that any word in a WWW document can act as a pointer to another document containing related information.

Interactive WWW "browsers" allow you to use a mouse or arrow keys to follow links to related text, images or sounds. It's kind of like reading a book where the footnotes come to life and drag you off into alternate realities against your will.

The cool thing about the Web is that you don't know (or care) where the documents live. The table of contents in a WWW document could point to chapters scattered across the Internet, and the text behind the links could even be FTP, Gopher, or Usenet based.

What the Heck is a URL?

A URL is simply the address of WWW document. URLs are not pretty, but they get the job done. You'll need a good supply of colons, slashes, dashes, and some other characters that you didn't even know were on your keyboard to make a really good URL.

And before we go one bit further, I'm going to lay down the law. URL: It rhymes with squirrel. Say it like 'your'll', and that's final. (Now don't anyone say that BoardWatch hasn't made an important contribution to Internet culture, all right?)

You've probably seen URL's like these in magazines, or in Usenet postings:

"Visit us online at <http://www.xyz.com/Big-Deal.html>"

"Visit my home page at <http://geek.edu/~bubba/my.html>"

Now "http" is very important and stands for something like "hyper text toilet paper," but trust me you'll do just fine without ever knowing the real meaning. Just don't try to pronounce it out loud in mixed company.

Weightless In Cyberspace

Forget "web surfing." Exploring the Web is more like waiting in line at the post office than hanging ten. Even with a 28.8 kbps modem and a T1 link, you type in the URL and you wait, because some bozo just had to put a 750K full-color mugshot on his home page.

There is for certain an evil-minded conspiracy out there that dreams up new ways to render your computer obsolete before you get it out of the box. Windows, WordPerfect, and now the Web... killer apps in the true sense of the word.

As The Earth Turns...

If you're tired of watching the little Mosaic globe spin, or if you have only e-mail access to the Internet, you can still enjoy the wonders of the Web, albeit vicariously.

- DR. BOB WORKING WWWONDERS WITH E-MAIL
- INSTALLING A LEASED LINE
- net, imperative GEEKS R US
- COOK REPORT TOM JENNINGS' LITTLE GARDEN

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There's a server at the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in Switzerland that will return WWW documents in response to e-mail requests. All you need to know is the URL (that long ugly string starting with "http:", "gopher:", "ftp:", etc.) and you can retrieve the document by sending e-mail to: listserv@www0.cern.ch

In the body of your note include one of these lines, replacing "<URL>" with the document's URL.

send <URL>

This will send you back the document you requested, with a list of all the links (URLs) it references, so that you may make further requests.

deep <URL>

Same as above, but it will also send you the documents referenced in the URL you specified. (May result in a LOT of data coming your way!)

To try WWW by e-mail send the following commands to listserv@www0.cern.ch:

**www send http://info.cern.ch send
http://info.cern.ch/hypertext/WWW/TheProject.html**

The first command will return the WWW-mail complete help file, which lists a few other commands you can use. You'll also receive the "WWW Welcome Page" and a WWW introduction which will include references to other Web documents you'll want to explore. If your modem and/or your mailbox can handle about 100K, you'll want to add:

**send
http://sunsite.unc.edu/boutell/faq/www_faq.html**

This will net you an excellent paper which answers frequently asked WWW questions. (Ginsu knives extra, send \$19.95 Netcash)

You can also get Usenet postings from the WWW mail server. Here are some examples:

**send news:comp.unix.ais (get a list of recent postings) deep
news:comp.unix.ais (get the list AND the postings)**

My Secret at CERN

I have a secret in Switzerland... Actually it's Arthur Secret, my buddy at CERN. Arthur is on the W3 team, and has been good to me. When I asked why the WWW-mail server couldn't handle the tilde character, he fix it pronto. When I asked if he could rig up Usenet

access through WWW-mail, he did that too! My next question for Arthur will be "How come I can't do a Web search by e-mail?" I'm sure he'll come through again.

Oh, by the way...Arthur told me he is going to make the WWW mail server code available to anyone running a Web site real soon. But don't tell anyone. It's a Secret.

But WAIS, There's More

WAIS stands for Wide Area Information Service, and is a means of searching a set of over 500 indexed databases. The range of topics is too broad to mention and besides, you'll soon know how to get the topic list for yourself.

You can use WAIS interactively by telnetting to quake.think.com or wais.com but I'd rather edit binary files with EDLIN. Talk about a geeky Unix-missing user interface... There are some things you just can't blame on a poor VT100 emulator, and this is one.

I recommend that you try WAIS by e-mail instead, unless you've done something horrible recently and feel the need to punish yourself. Send e-mail to waismail@quake.think.com with HELP in the body of the note to get the full WAIS-mail user guide. If you can't wait, use the info below as a quick start.

A list of WAIS databases (or "resources" as they like to be called) can be obtained by sending e-mail to WAISmail with the command:

search xxx xxx

in the body of the note. Look through the returned list for topics that are of interest to you and use one of them in the next example. Here's a sample of WAIS resources that are available. Note that the ".src" suffix can be omitted when searching, but do be careful to preserve the capitalization.)

**bible.src
clinton-speeches.src
Federal-Register-Index.src
internet-intros.src
internet-user-glossary.src
linux-faq.src
movie-lists.src
recipes.src
US-Congress-Phone-Fax.src
world-factbook93.src
zipcodes.src**

OK, let's do an actual search. Send e-mail to waismail@quake.think.com with the following commands in the note body:

**maxres 10
search bible flood**

This will tell WAISmail to search through the text of the "bible.src" database and return a list of at most 10 documents containing the word "flood".

You will receive an e-mail response something like this:

**From: WAISmail@Think.COM
Searching: bible
Keywords: flood**

**Result # 1 Score:1000 lines: 0 bytes: 3556
Date:910101 Type: TEXT
Headline: Genesis: Chapter 9 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons...
DocID: 0000000457KJV :cmns-
moon.think.com@cmns-
moon.think.com:210%TEXT**

To retrieve the full text of a matching document, just use one of the returned "DOCID:" lines exactly as is. So your next e-mail to WAISmail must be just this line:

**DocID: 0000000457KJV :cmns-
moon.think.com@cmns-
moon.think.com:210%TEXT**

This will cause the referenced "document" to be sent to you by e-mail. OK, now put your newfound knowledge to work. See if you can find a fax number for Newt Gingrich. :)

NET.PEEVES!

Is there something in cyberspace that's really bugging you? Here's my list...

- 1) Sites that disable "finger"
- 2) E-mail addresses that don't fit on a single line
- 3) People who are not in the "whois" database
- 4) WWW browsers without forms support
- 5) People who go ballistic when you say "Usenet is the chat area of the Internet"

Got a net.peeve? Send it to "BobRankin@Delphi.Com", and just maybe you'll see it here next month! ♦

[Bob Rankin, known as "Doctor Bob" in the online world, is a computer programmer and consultant who enjoys exploring the Internet. His free guide "Accessing The Internet By E-mail" and "100 Cool Things To Do On The Internet" and "Doctor Bob's Internet Business Guide" available for \$5.00 each, are available from Bob, email: BobRankin@Delphi.Com]

INSTALLING A LEASED LINE

by Bernard Aboba

Myth versus fact Leased telephone lines are used to link together two locations so as to form a private wide area network (WAN) or to connect a single computer or a network of computers to packet switching networks such as the Internet. The conventional wisdom holds that leased lines are only for well-heeled corporations, that small businesses or bulletin boards couldn't possibly want or need such a connection. Even if a sysop or small business were to be wrong-headed enough to want such a connection, the "experts" maintain that installing a leased line is incredibly complicated work best left to telecommunications consultants charging \$300/hour.

As is often the case, the conventional wisdom is wrong. With a little help from your Internet Service Provider, and local phone company, hooking up a leased line can be as simple as plug-

ging in a few cables, and easier than figuring out a modem init string. In this article we'll show you how.

Getting started The first thing you need to do before getting started is to have the leased line installed. Since 56 Kbps and T1 leased lines use four ordinary copper phone wires, which look like - **figure 1**:

If you have two unused phone lines (two pairs of wires) available at your location, your local carrier will not have to bring additional cable to your location. Instead, they will take the four wires, hook them up to the terminals on your switch box. Here is a picture of what it will look like **figure 2**:

They will then bring the wire into your dwelling, and terminate it in what looks like an ordinary phone jack, see **figure 3**:

Below is a picture of the cable than runs from the jack to your Channel Service Unit/Digital Service Unit (CSU/DSU). One of these cables will

typically come with your CSU/DSU. See **figure 4**.

The CSU/DSU serves to take digital data in the format used by the router, and translate it into the digital format used by leased lines. A picture of the front view of a CSU/DSU is shown in **figure 5**:

Here is the back view; note the plugged in leased line cable in **figure 6**:

A V.35 cable is used to connect the CSU/DSU to the router. This is what the female and male ends of a V.35 connector look like - **figure 7**:

Here is the side view - **figure 8**:

Now where does the other end of the V.35 cable go? Well, if you are only connecting a single computer, you can purchase a synchronous adapter with a V.35 interface, and plug the adapter the card into your PC. Synchronous cards (and drivers for KA9Q or PCROUTE) are available from NiWot Networks. Using synchronous cards

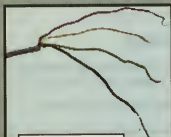


Figure 1



Figure 2

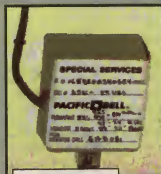


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 6



Figure 5

and packet drivers, it is also possible to run software such Trumpet Winsock.

However, if you'd like to connect a network of computers to the leased line, you will need a router. Through purchase of a synchronous card, network adapter, and appropriate drivers, you can build a router using PCROUTE or KA9Q.

Although it is more expensive, purchasing a dedicated router such as the Livingston IRX-111 pictured below will provide higher reliability as well as important additional features such as support for Frame Relay, SNMP, OSPF routing, and various security features.

The Livingston IRX-111 is available for around \$2000 or so, and supports Frame Relay as well as routing at up to T1 speeds, plus Thin, Thick or 10BaseT Ethernet hookups. Information on Livingston products is available at:

[ftp://ftp.netcom.com/pub/livingston](http://ftp.netcom.com/pub/livingston)

Here is what the back of the Livingston looks like - **figure 9**:

Fromleft to right, note the asynchronous port; a sync/async port (set to sync here); and the choice of Thin, Thick or 10BaseT Ethernet connections.

Another alternative are the Morningstar Express 2 series routers. More information on these is available via:

[ftp://ftp.morningstar.com/Express](http://ftp.morningstar.com/Express)

When everything is connected up, here is what it will look like **figure 10**:

Bernard Aboba, aboba@internaut.com

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Matisse Enzer of www.matisse.net Internet Literacy Consultants whose Internet connection is photographed in this article. ♦

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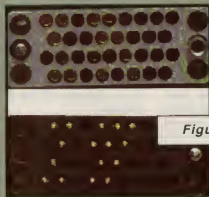


Figure 7



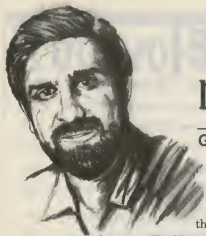
Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



net.imperative

by Harley Hahn and Wendy Murdock

GEEKS R US

Harley Hahn is an internationally recognized author, consultant and analyst. His books include: *The Internet Complete Reference*, *A Student's Guide to Unix*, *The Internet Yellow Pages*, and *Unix Unbound*.

Wendy Murdock is an artist, writer, and Internet veteran specializing in creative art forms including BBBS and MUDs.

When Harley was an undergraduate at the University of Waterloo, Canada, there was a social phenomenon that we are sure you have experienced. People would create and join cliques, and then do something special in order to announce to the world that they belonged to this or that particular collection of people. And, almost universally, such statements were announced via the medium of customized T-shirts.

Way back in the olden days — when “computer” meant something the size of a small nuclear power plant, and extra memory cost \$1 per byte — Harley was studying math and computer science, and the groups that surrounded him were esoteric clusters of math and computer science students, the forerunners of what, today, you might call geeks.

Thus, if you were to hang around the cafeteria in the math building at the University of Waterloo, circa 1975, you would notice gaggles of geek-like people, many of whom were wearing T-shirts proclaiming their social achievements. Look this way and you would encounter a tall, skinny, near-sighted fellow, strolling past the juice machine, carrying a box full of computer cards under his arm: a fellow whose societal cachet was distinctly enhanced by an extra-large T-shirt that proclaimed him to be a member of the Math Society. Look that way, and you would notice a quartet of highly-rational but sartorially-challenged operations research students, whose T-shirts announced to the world that they volunteered their spare time at Radio Waterloo (the campus radio station).

The tradition of dressing to impress is, of course, universal. We imagine that millions of years ago, it would have been possible for an observer within the primordial soup to notice that the better bacteria would affect to wear extra proteins within their phospholipid membrane, in order to achieve that certain *je ne sais quoi* that did so much to distinguish one primitive cell from his brother.

Indeed, throughout human history, it is the rule, rather than the exception, that people will dress to leave no doubt as to which group they belong. Here, you will notice the middle-aged insurance salesman, discretely wearing his Masonic pin over his gray and blue-striped tie; there you will observe the young Beau Brummel who, no doubt with the best of intentions, sports a set of extra wide dark blue trousers, a pair of red high-topped running shoes with untied laces, a white and green pin-striped

shirt with the sleeves ripped off, two gold earrings in his left ear, and a four-inch wide velvet tie, with a picture of a hula dancer, that lights up in the dark and says “Philadelphia is a Fun City.”

Yes, the custom of announcing one's characteristics by one's clothing is an old one. It's just that, for some reason, geeks like to do it with T-shirts.

ON THE INTERNET, SHIRTS DON'T COUNT

A couple of years ago, Harley attended a Usenix conference: the place where the geeks of the Unix world gather to cavort and discuss such topics as “Filesystem Daemons as Unifying Mechanism for Network Information Access.”

In the lobby of the conference hall, there was a small stand, at which you could purchase Usenix-oriented memorabilia. In particular, for the insignificant sum of \$10, you could buy a light-blue T-shirt with a picture of a cute devil-like halfling. Below this engaging fellow, was the cunning slogan “4.3 BSD System Daemon”. (This “daemon”, by the way, was drawn by John Lasseter in 1989 and is the de facto mascot of the Berkeley Unix operating system.)

Of course, it was the work of a moment for Harley to purchase one of these souvenirs and, to this day it hangs proudly in his closet, in between his “Tintin and The Blue Lotus” T-shirt and the “Assembler: Inside and Out” commemorative sweatshirt.

What was most interesting about the daemon T-shirt, though, was that there was a special, exclusive edition, the exact same shirt differing in one small detail — there were no words underneath the daemon. And this slightly different T-shirt was available only to a select group of geeks: the ones who had taken an active part in developing the 4.3 BSD operating system. Thus, amid the general intellectual brouhaha of a technical Unix conference, the old T-shirt wheeze was still being used to distinguish one set of hacker-oriented geeks from another.

To a casual observer, it might seem as if geekiness and T-shirts are somehow linked intractably, and that nothing less than powerful machinery would suffice to separate a geek from his customized T-shirt. All very true for Real Life, but what about the Net? On the Internet, no one can see what you are wearing. You might be hacking away all night in your “I Brake For Floating-Point Bugs” T-shirt with the “Friends Don't Let Friends Use Windows”

button, and for all the good it will do you, you might as well be wearing your Beans' purple and green polo pajamas.

Clearly, what is needed is a way for a geek-like person to express his individual tastes and talents in a manner that is accessible to his Net neighbors everywhere. But, still, we must retain some exclusivity. Although everyone may see a person's announcement of individuality, the geek of today requires that his personal statement be, not only intellectually stimulating, but completely understandable in all its nuances to only those select few whose skills and tastes are evolved enough to "get it."

And thus was born... The Geek Code.

WHAT IS A GEEK?

The Geek Code is a compact way for someone to summarize his or her fundamental characteristics within a few lines. For example, here is the Geek Code for Harley:

```
GCS/M/D/TW d? H s !g(+) p !au a+ w--
v+++ C++ U$+++ $ P+ L 3 E-- N+ K++ W--
M- V- -po+ Y+ t !5 j- R- G? !tv b+++
D B- e++++ u+++ h+ f- r+ n++ y++
```

The nice thing about the Geek Code is that it is so compact that you can easily append your personal summary to your signature, at the bottom of all your e-mail and Usenet postings. True, the code is obtuse, but signatures are supposed to be short and a more lengthy code would take up too much room.

However, before we get into the code itself, let's take a moment to explore the fundamental questions: "What is a geek?" and "Is a geek the same as a nerd?"

For most of this century, the word "geek" was used to describe a certain type of carnival performer. A geek was a wild man whose act usually included biting off the head of a live chicken or snake. In this sense, the word "geek" was derived from the Low

German word "geek", which meant a fool or simpleton. Shakespeare, in the play Twelfth Night mentions, "The most notorious geckes and gull..." (Shakespeare, as you know, was a fairly decent writer, but he did have a lot of trouble with spelling.)

Sometime in the 1980s, the term "geek" came to reflect a new meaning: a person who spends a lot of his or her time using a computer for social interaction. As a general rule, geeks are social outcasts with respect to mainstream culture. However, within their own culture (which is surprisingly well developed), a particular geek may have oodles of friends, many of which are online companions. When geeks gather in person, they have their own argot: for example, where more mainstream humans beings would go out to eat, a group of geeks will go for a "food run".

The nice thing about geeks is that, starting life as social outcasts, they are as accepting a group of people as you will find online (except perhaps, the neo-Pagan/bisexual/Earth Mothers). The world of Geeks comprise all sorts of people: trekkies, IRC fanatics, MUDers, science fiction fans, Usenet junkies, amateur radio operators, and so on. About the only thing that you need to possess to enter the geek community is a connection to the Net and the wherewithal to use it competently.

Geeks gather in a variety of places, on and off the Net. For example, there is a strong Geek community in Santa Cruz, California, many of whom live together in "Geek Houses". Perhaps it is best summed up by the riddle, "When does a Geek father cry?". The answer being, "When his son creates his first home page." This is not to imply that all geeks are male. Indeed, there are an enormous number of women geeks; it's just that, as with other aspects of the Net, there are more male geeks than females. No doubt Nature, in her infinite wisdom, is trying to tell us something.

ARE GEEKS THE SAME AS NERDS?

By now, you are probably wondering if geeks are the same as nerds. The answer is no. Traditionally, a nerd is someone with no social skills who is obsessed with a particular technology. Although, we tend to think of nerds as being computer monomaniacs, they actually come in various flavors. Perhaps the best definition of a nerd is someone who, at least in spirit, is usually found wearing a plaid shirt, taped glasses, and a pocket protector.

Although this is not a strict definition of a nerd, the important thing to appreciate is that, compared to nerds, geeks are more social and have at least a rudimentary sense of style. True, there are nerds who are geeks, and we could go into all the types and sub-types. Such an exposition is, unfortunately, well beyond the scope of this article.

Still, as the Net becomes an ever-increasing part of normal life, the line between geeks and nerds draws ever more blurry. For example, although we associate long bouts of intellectual effort (especially programming) with nerds, the word "geek" is often used as a verb with a similar meaning, albeit with more social overtones. For example, say that you are at a party and, in the course of a conversation, someone finds it necessary to digress momentarily upon a highly-technical point. He might preface his remarks by saying, "Excuse me, but I need to geek out for a moment." (A nerd will probably not even be at the party in the first place.)

Suffice to say that those nerds who are also geeks generally use the Net as a screen to hide from interacting in person. Thus, there is little chance that you will encounter an actual nerd at a Real Life gathering, no matter how many geeks happen to be there.

If all this confuses you, perhaps the best way to think about it all is to realize that dogs are geeks and cats are nerds.

THE GEEK CODE

So, having explored the nuances of geeks and their characteristics, let us turn our attention to the Geek Code: the mysterious shorthand notation that geeks use to describe themselves to the world.

The Geek Code was originally developed by Robert Hayden, who then expanded it several times based upon numerous suggestions from the Net. The current version, as we go to press, is 2.1.

The code consists of a large number of items, each of which expresses one characteristic about the person in question. Version 2.1 contains 38 such items. To show you what it looks like, here are the Geek Codes for four well known celebrities: Harley Hahn, Wendy Murdoch, Bill Gates, and the Queen of England:

Harley Hahn:

```
GCS/M/MD/TW d? H s !g(+) p lau a+ w+
+++ C++ US+++$ P+ L3 E-- N+ K++ W--
M- V- -po+ Y+ t !5 j- R- G? !tv b+++
D B- e++++ u++ h+ f- r+ n++ y++
```

Wendy Murdock:

```
GFA/TW -d+ H++ s:- !g p3 au- a- w++@
v C++(+++) US P? L- 3- E- N+ K++(+++) !W
M+ !V po Y+ t+ !5 !j R+ G' !tv b++(+++)
!D B- e++ u++ h+ f++ r+ n+ x?
```

Bill Gates:

```
GB d++ H s:- g+ pl+ au+++++> a39 w+
v C++ U-- P- L-- 3- E- N- K- W+++$
M !V po++ Y- t !5 j++ R+++ G? tv- b++>+
D B e+ u+ h++(-) f-- r+++ n- y+++>*
```

The Queen of England:

```
GG d++ H- s:- !g(+) p0 au++++(+ ) a69 w-
++ C- U? P? !L !3 E? !N K- !W
!D !V po+$ Y t- !5 !j !R G? tv+ b
!D B? !e u+++ h-- *f* r+++ n+ x++++(!)
```

In order to understand the Geek Code, all you need to know is what each of the items mean. The actual details are lengthy, so we will give you an overview and discuss a few examples. And in the resources section of this article, we will show you where to download the definitive explanation of the entire code.

If you want to follow the discussion using our four examples, take a look at the accompanying table in which we have shown the same descriptions with each item on a separate line. This allows you to isolate the individual elements, and makes it easy to compare one person's code to another.

UNDERSTANDING THE GEEK CODE

To start, we will say that there is no programming or mathematics involved. For example, notice that the second item for the Queen of England is `*d+*`. This looks a lot like an expression from the C programming language, but it is not, so don't worry; the Geek Code is actually pretty easy to understand.

In its most basic form, each item stands for a single characteristic to which you append one or more `*+*` or `*-*` characters. The part that you append is called a "qualifier." For example, the letter `*d*` tells you something about how the person dresses. A qualifier of `*+*` indicates that the person dresses conservatively; a `*-*` shows that the person dresses casually. You can use multiple `*+*` or `*-*` characters to indicate a more extreme trait.

Take a look at our examples. Both Bill Gates and the Queen of England boast a dress description of `*d+*`. This means that they both dress extra conservatively. Another common qualifier is the `*?*` character. This means that the person is ignorant about the particular characteristic. For example, Harley has a dress description of `*d?*`. This shows you that Harley doesn't pay a lot of attention to what he wears.

Perhaps a better example is the `*P*` item. This one shows how the person feels about the Perl programming language. (If you don't know what Perl is, forget it for now, it's just an example.) If a geek happens to like Perl, he would use `*P+*`; if he likes Perl a lot, he would use `*P+++*`; if he likes Perl more than life itself, he could use `*P++++*` or even `*P+++++`. Similarly, he could use `*P-*`, `*P--*`, or `*P---*`, to indicate various levels of antipathy towards Perl. And, if the person did not even know what Perl is, he would use `*P?*`.

So, in its simplest case, an item in the Geek Code can be qualified by one or more `*+*` or `*-*` characters, to show a type of behavior or how the geek feels about something.

To these guidelines, we will add the `*!*` qualifier. This comes before the actual letter, and indicates either that something does not exist in your portion of the world, or that you do not know where it is. For example, if the geek's computer system does not even have Perl, he would use `*!P*`.

The tricky thing is that sometimes `*!*`, and not the `*?*` character, is used to mean that you are ignorant about something. For example, the `*L*` character tells about a geek's attitude towards Linux (a Unix clone). As you might guess, `*L+*` means the geek likes Linux, `*L++*` means he likes Linux even more, `*L-*` means that he does not like Linux, and so on. However, if he does not know what Linux is, he would use `*!L*`.

Now you might ask, why does the code use `*!L*` and not `*L?*` which would seem to make more sense? The answer is, the Geek Code is not yet perfect and it does have a few inconsistencies. However, if you are a real geek, such minor details should not bother you.

WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM GETTING LOST?

Once you get used to it, the Geek Code is easy to understand. However, at the beginning, it can be confusing and, by now, you might be asking yourself, how can you understand the code (or even construct a code for yourself) without getting lost?

The answer is that you don't really have to memorize a lot of rules. All you need to do is download the Geek Code documentation. It walks you through each part of the code, and shows you what each possible value means. It's actually pretty easy. In fact, there are only two rules that you need to memorize.

First, it is customary to place the various items in the code in the same order that they appear in the official description. (Take a look at our examples.)

Second, as with Unix and certain programming languages, you must be careful to use upper- and lowercase exactly. For example, as we have seen, you use the `*d*` character to tell people about how you dress. The `*D*` item, however, is completely different: it describes how you feel about the PC Game "DOOM."

To give a complete description of the Geek Code, along with everything you need to understand every item, would take a lot of time. Instead, let's take a quick tour through the code, using our examples from time to time. Once you finish the tour, you can download the official description and figure out the details for yourself.

As with all Geek-like systems, don't feel that you have to understand everything all at once. Work with the parts that you do understand and, in time, it will all make sense.

A TOUR OF THE GEEK CODE

The Geek Code Consists of six parts. First, there is a single item proclaiming to the world that you are, indeed, a geek, and showing what type of geek you are. This item consists of a *G* character, followed by one or more abbreviations. If you use more than one abbreviation, you separate them with slash characters.

In our examples, we use seven different abbreviations (although there are a lot more). The abbreviations are: *CS* (computer science), *M* (mathematics), *MD* (medicine), *TW* (technical writing), *FA* (fine arts), *B* (business), *G* (government).

In particular, we have:

Harley: *GCS/M/MD/TW*

Wendy: *GFA/TW*

Bill Gates: *GB*

The Queen: *GG*

Thus we see that Harley (who has degrees in mathematics, computer science, and who went to medical school), is a geek of computer science, mathematics, medicine, and technical writing.

Wendy (who has a degree in fine arts) is a geek of fine arts and technical writing.

And finally, Bill Gates is a geek of business while the Queen of England is a geek of government.

After the initial geek proclamation, the rest of the code consists of a large number of items, organized into five main categories.

The first category is appearance. The items are as follows:

Section I: Appearance

Dress: *d*
Hair: *H*
Height and Physical Shape: *s*
Glasses: *g*
Pens: *p*
Automobile: *au*
Age: *a*
Weirdness: *w*
Verbage: *v*

These items give you a good general idea of what someone looks like, their general place in life, and how they act. For example, in our example, we see that Bill Gates wears glasses [*g*+], while Wendy does not [*!g*]. We also see that, generally speaking, Harley and the Queen do not wear glasses [*g*+*], although they do so for reading.

The next category shows you how the person uses computers, and how he or she relates to them.

Section II: Computers

Computers: *C*
 Unix: *U*
 Perl: *P*
 Linux: *L*
 386bsd: *3*
 Emacs: *E*
 Usenet News: *N*
 Kibo: *K*
 Windows: *W*
 Macintosh: *M*
 VMS: *V*

In our example, Harley [$^*C++^*$], Wendy [$^*C++(+++)^*$], and Bill Gates [$^*C++^*$] are highly involved with computers. The Queen, as you might expect, wouldn't know a computer if it was served to her on a silver platter with a watercress dressing [$^*C^-^*$]. (The extra notation within Wendy's description means that sometimes she is $^*C++^*$ and other times she is $^*C+++^*$.)

The other computer items have to do with specific operating systems, tools and phenomena. As you can see, Bill Gates loves Windows ["W++++\$"] and has a marked antipathy towards Unix ["U-----"]. Compare this to Harley, who holds completely opposite views: "W*-*" and "U\$++++\$". (Notice, also, that Bill Gates has never been able to write an article judged good enough for Board-watch Magazine.)

By the way, a `*$*` character at the end of a computer item means that the person uses this system to earn his living (which, among geeks, is considered to be pretty cool). If a person does use Unix, the letter after the `*T*` indicates what type of Unix he uses. In our example, the letter `*S*` refers to Sun OS.

The third section has to do with the geek's political views. In general, geeks are able to rise well above politics, which may be why this section is so short.

Section III: Politics

Politics: *po*
Cypherpunks: *Y*

The *po* items describes a general political orientation. The *Y* item shows the geek's views with respect to electronic privacy, especially on the Net. (A cypherpunk is someone who strongly believes that information privacy is an important civil liberty that must be preserved as the Net evolves.)

In our example you can see that both Harley and Wendy [*Y+*] believe that information privacy is important. Bill Gates, as we all know, has different plans for our future [*Y—*]. And the Queen [*Y*], as you would imagine, has better things to worry about.

The next category describes what types of geek-oriented entertainment the person enjoys. Here are the items:

Section IV: Entertainment

Star Trek: *t*
 Babylon 5: *5*
 Jeopardy: *j*
 Role Playing: *R*
 Magic: The Gathering: *G*
 Television: *tv*
 Books: *b*
 DOOM: *D*
 Barney the Dinosaur: *B*

The entertainment items are carefully selected to let you know everything that you need to know about how a particular geek likes to amuse himself. Some of the pastimes — such as Star Trek — are so widely embraced as to be cliché. Others — such as Magic: The Gathering — are esoteric enough that you may not even have heard of them unless you are a well-connected zealous geek.

To choose just one entertainment item from our example, we can see that neither Wendy nor the Queen have ever seen Jeopardy [*j*] and that, although Harley has seen the show, he does not think much of it [*j.*]. Bill Gates, however, not only watches the show, he annoys others by shouting out the answers before the contestants have time to respond [*j++*].

The final section of the Geek Code concerns itself with the lifestyle of the geek. In this section we find information about the Geek's education, interests and relationships. The specific items are as follows:

Section V: Lifestyle

Education: *e*
Music: *u*
Housing: *h*
Friends: *f*
Relationships: *r*

Nutrition: *n*
Sex: *x* or *y*

This section of the code can tell you a lot about the geek in question, provided that he or she has been honest. Still, most geeks are better adjusted than the population at large in that they do not feel a desire to hide their deficiencies. Indeed, within the Geek community, what would be looked upon as shortcomings by an outsider, are often perceived as being desirable attributes.

For example, even though Bill Gates is married [*h---*], he lives in the largest, most expensive geek house in the history of mankind [*h+++*]. Thus, we can describe his housing situation as *h++(---)*.

The Queen of England, conversely, enjoys a much different lifestyle. True, she also lives in a large, expensive house filled with overpriced items of dubious taste. However, the Queen is married with children, which makes her *h---*⁺. Moreover, her immediate environment reflects the epitome of non-geekiness that we have come to expect from the English upper class (as opposed to, say, the American upper class). For instance, we imagine that you could search Buckingham Palace in vain for an Ethernet drop or even a modular phone jack.

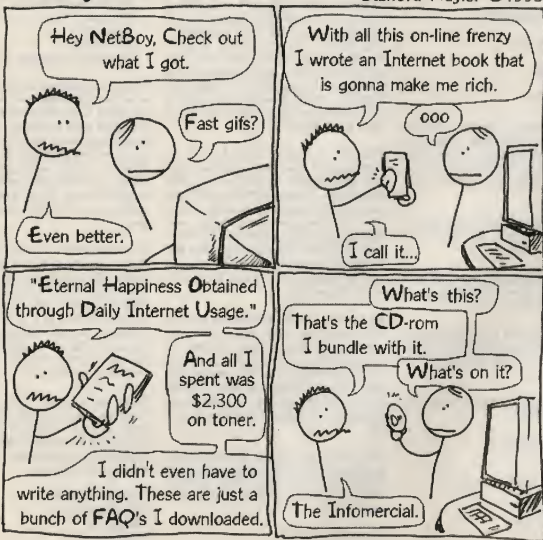
Bill Gate's house is much different. In all our visits, we have never had much of a problem finding an unused workstation from which to check our email. In fact, the only significant geek-oriented disadvantage to the Gates house is that it is so large, you have to

start a food run about 15 minutes before you get hungry.

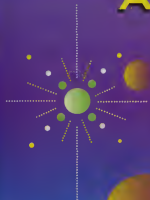
Still, it is nice to know that, whether you are the Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft or simply the head of state of an obscure European island, you can announce your geek-like attributes to the world by a simple three- or four-line code within your Internet signature. Although it may be way cool to walk around dressed in a garment that says "Hug Me, I'm a Billionaire", in these modern days of instant information and ubiquitous Net access, people demand more meaningful details, and a simple T-shirt just doesn't cut it anymore. ♦

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FOUR EXAMPLES OF THE GEEK CODE

	Harley Hahn	Wendy Murdoch	Bill Gates	The Queen of England
Main Description	GCS/M/MD/TW	GFA/TW	GB	GG
Appearance				
Dress	d?	d+	d++	d++
Hair	H	H++	H	H-
Height and Shape	s	s-1-	s-1-	s-1-
Glasses	lg(+)	lg	g+	lg(+)
Pens	p	p3	p1+	pD
Automobile	lau	au-	au+++++	au++++(+)
Age	a+	a	a39	a69
Weirdness	w+	w++@	w+	w-
Verbage	v+++	v	v+	v++
Computers				
Computers	C++	C++(++)	C++	C-
Unix	US+++	US	U-	U?
Perl	P+	P?	P-	P?
Linux	L	L-	L-	1L
386bsd	3	3-	3-	13
Emacs	E--	E-	E-	E?
Usenet News	N-	N-	N-	1N
Kibo	K++	K++(++)	K-	K-
Windows	W-	1W	W++++	1W
Macintosh	M-	M	M?	M?
VMS	V	1V	1V	1V
Politics				
Politics	po+	po	po++	po+\$
Cyberpunks	Y+	Y+	Y-	Y
Entertainment				
Star Trek	t	t+	t	t-
Babylon 5	15	15	15	15
Jeopardy	j-	1j	j++	j?
Role Playing	R-	R+	R++	1R
Magic:The Gathering	G?	G	G?	G?
Television	1tv	1tv	tv-	tv+
Books	b+++	b++(++)	b++++	b
DOOM	D	1D	D	1D
Barney the Dinosaur	B-	B-	B	B?
Lifestyle				
Education	e++++	e++	e	1e
Music	u++	u++	u+	u+++
Housing	h+	h+	h++(-)	h-
Friends	f-	f++	f--	f*
Relationships	r+	r+	r++	r+++
Nutrition	n++	n+	n-	n+
Sex	y++	x?	y+++*	x++++(1)

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RESOURCES

The best way to get an up-to-date, official description of the Geek Code is by fingering the fellow who invented the code:

Robert Hayden. The command to use is:

`finger hayden@vax1.mankato.msus.edu`

If you use the web, you can retrieve the Geek Code by pointing your browser at:

`gopher://vax1.mankato.msus.edu:79/Mhayden`

Alternatively, you can use your gopher to get the Geek Code from the Electronic Frontier Foundation. The command is:

`gopher gopher.eff.org`

Once you connect, make the following choices

Net Info
Net_culture
geek.code

If you feel like exploring some of the great geek places on the net, start with the geek community in Santa Cruz, California. To tune in on the Santa Cruz geek social scene, use your web browser to connect to:

`http://klinzhal.luma.com/~falcon/geeks/index.html`

To meet the inhabitants of some of Santa Cruz's most colorful geek houses, connect to:

`http://klinzhal.luma.com/~falcon/geeks/geek-house.html`

If you would like to read a short essay, defining the modern geek and showing how he or she is different from a nerd, take a look at:

`http://samsara.circus.com/~omni/geek.html`

This definitive description of What is a geek? (at least a West Coast geek), was written by Craig Jackson, who lives in a Santa Cruz geek house named the "Marshmallow Peanut Circus."

So far, we have talked only about the Geek Code. However, there are other such classification schemes in use on the Net. (The Geek Code, in fact, was a replacement for other earlier codes.) However, when it comes to social codes, there is a lot of work being done in the gay

community. For gay men, there are the Bear Code, the Twink Code, the Pearce Code and the Smurf Code. For gay women, there are the Muffdiva Code and the Womyns Grl Code.

(In gay slang, a "bear" is a big, hairy man. A "twink" is a cute, young male thing; the name comes from "twinkie": someone who is "golden, cream-filled and ready to be eaten." The Pearce Code is named after its inventor, Tim Pearce. A "smurf" is someone who is irreverent, silly and cute. The Smurf Code is a satire of the other codes.)

The most convenient way to find all these codes in one place is to use your gopher. The command is:

`gopher gopher.castl.com`

Once you connect, make the following choices:

Queer Resources
Queer Resources Directory Mother Archive
Computer Information for Queers
sig-codes

Finally, the technical paper that we mentioned in the text — "Filesystem Daemons as Unifying Mechanism for Network Information Access" — really exists. It was written by Steve Summit, a consultant in Seattle, Washington, and presented in January 1994 at the Usenix Winter Conference in San Francisco. If you would like to find out more about the paper, or anything else in the online library index of Usenix publications, use your browser to connect to:

`http://www.usenix.org`

(Follow the publications link.)

If you get serious about cruising through Usenix publications, you may want to do so by e-mail or ftp. You can get instructions by sending a message to:

`Info@usenix.org`

The subject can be whatever you want, but within the message, type the single line:

`send index publications`

You will receive the appropriate information by return mail. ♦



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COOK REPORT

by Gordon Cook

TOM JENNINGS' LITTLE GARDEN

Author's Note: For months we had been hearing good things about the Little Garden as a model of good service and low cost connectivity. Finally, one evening in November we caught up with Tom Jennings who has been directing its growth for two years. Not surprisingly Jennings runs a grass roots, low cost, but highly professional operation that typifies what can be done to provide BBS operators with good Internet connectivity.

COOK Report: What got you into the Internet services business?

Jennings: I never really did decide to do it. It just sort of happened. The Little Garden started before I did. John Gilmore (formerly of Sun Microsystems and EFF Board member), John Romke (Unix wizard and first person to connect a toaster to a network) and Steve Crocker (of Trusted Information Systems) all said "gee, I bet we could get on the Internet for less than five grand." This was around 1990 - 1991.

So they strung together some hardware - it cost them ten grand of course - and got either a 56 Kbps or fractional T-1 connection to UUNET. Because the \$1,000 a month charge was expensive, Rick Adams allowed them to split the cost three ways. The original e-mail said essentially I don't care what you guys do; just don't cause me a lot of support grief - a reasonable answer all things considered.

COOK Report: We have heard that concerns about having to provide unreasonable amounts of support are one of the reasons that some providers don't want resellers.

Jennings: Well that's a crock. Because what you simply say is Trusted Information Systems is our customer. We will only accept calls from them. If people downstream of TIS, like Gilmore, have trouble, they have to work it out with TIS. All there needs to be is a single point of contact for the Alternet service. Little Garden has resellers going two and three deep now. We do occasionally get calls from people who don't realize the hierarchy and we gently point them back to the appropriate level.

So to get back to the story, they had the leased line from UUNET to TIS in Mountain View, and from there a 56 Kbps line went to an apartment in Palo Alto where Cygnus started out by renting an apartment and, as they needed more space, they rented more apartments in the same complex and ran Ethernet between them. Then John also ran a 56 Kbps line from the apartments to his San Francisco house - otherwise known as Toad Hall and on the net as toad.com.

Over the next year or so they connected a bunch of friends and co-conspirators: Rich Morin, Kenton Hoover, Tim Pozar and Ed Elhaug. These were all connected as 9600 baud dial-up sites. For routers they were using a bunch of PCs running NOS with Phil Karn's KA9Q protocol. It was all very kludgy and unreliable. And for a while it was quite stable at six to eight users and I don't think Rick Adams even knew what we were doing or, had he known, that he would have cared.

But by late 1992 or early 1993, John Gilmore started to get expansionist



Creator of Fidonet, Tom Jennings

ideas about the Little Garden - which, by the way, is named after a Chinese restaurant in Palo Alto. John's ideas had to do with the behavior of the commercial Internet people who appeared to be reluctant to do whatever had to be done to drive down the cost of connectivity to the network. Gilmore wanted to use what we had developed in Little Garden to enable as many small people to get on the net as we possibly could. So in 1992 we did add some more people but not very many because most of us had other full time jobs and doing our home brew networking was time consuming.

COOK Report: Would it be fair in those days to describe it as a hackers' network - par excellence?

Jennings: Oh absolutely! It served people's needs. They came up with numbers. Originally a thousand dollars a month. The original three split the cost of the thousand dollars three ways. When they added the modem sites they did some back-of-the-napkin arithmetic and said lets call the dial up charges \$70 a month. We have added some charges for phone line costs but are still basically using these figures.

COOK Report: You are getting more people involved. Are you increasing your usage with UUNET?

Jennings: They measured your usage. If it stayed below a very conservative average, they billed you at one rate. When it went above it for more than 30 days they billed you at the next higher rate.

COOK Report: You were able to do a good deal of growing before you ran into that fixed cost rate ceiling?

Jennings: Oh yeah. We are still playing that game as is everyone else in the Internet. You have to buy capacity that you aren't using yet. But what happens is that you can get up fairly high in your load to feed before performance starts to deteriorate. But by then you have the cash flow to pay for the next upgrade. By late 1992 there began to be a lot of folk who wanted to come on board Little Garden. However, none of the founding parties had the time to accommodate them. I was still doing my big drop out thing. (Whatever happens after this it will not be a technology job. It makes me really nuts.) I was basically living on no money.

COOK Report: So after Fido you went into a period of quiescence?

Jennings: It happened actually halfway through the Fido thing, which was fortuitous because people just kept mailing me checks. At its peak, Fido grossed **\$30,000** one year as shareware. At that time, I wasn't living on much money. I had been at Cygnus for a month and didn't like it. It was not their fault. It was just that Palo Alto makes me really nuts.

Some time in late '92, John Gilmore and I worked out a plan. He said to me: we have this network thing and you can get a free connection out of this, and maintain the network and we'll start charging people at the current **\$70** a month; in exchange for the work I'd keep some of the money according to this algorithm we came up with. **\$70** paid for a full time 9,600 baud modem based SLIP connection.

COOK Report: This was something that you could run with a Netblazer?

Jennings: Yes, but at the time we were doing it even more simply using NOS on

the router end and a modem port on the customer end. When I started, the network support situation was all too casual. NOS boxes died all the time, and, if there was no one around to tend to it, the box just stayed down until someone was available. But everybody was really laid back because **\$70** a month for full time net connection was absolutely unheard of.

So the deal was, I'd handle maintenance, in exchange I got to not have a job and got to make another **\$400** a month. I started this in October of 1992. By July or August of 1993 it was up to a grand total of **\$700**. Then we worked out what it cost to buy a NOS box and the related stuff and I charged people **\$250** to install plus **\$70** a month. Borrowing **\$800** from John Gilmore I got one machine ahead.

COOK Report: You were making these in your bedroom so to speak?

Jennings: Yeah. When I did four installs, I had **\$1000** and the machines, which were 386 SXs, 16 megahertz, one megabyte of memory and one floppy-cost **\$800**. A really minimal configuration because NOS did all its work out of memory. Consequently, I had **\$200** left over for cables, X-10 power cubes and other stuff.

KA9Q is fine software, but we were abusing it - abusing it hard by attempting to use it in embedded remote circumstances for which it was really not designed. For a client machine on your desktop it was great. If you just had a DOS machine with 640k, one floppy and a modem, you could do everything on it - DNS, FTP, SMTP mail. But we weren't using any of that. We were using only the router functions.

COOK Report: Do you view what you were doing as a means of low cost leveraging of the Fido community onto the Internet?

Jennings: No, because it still hasn't done that. The knowledge entry level is still too high. Unless you are already part of the university/military/industrial complex you could not get adequate knowledge of how to get the stuff set up - no matter how much hardware you had.

COOK Report: Well, whatever the motive, it sounds like you were offering network connectivity for a fraction of

what it would cost from a standard commercial organization.

Jennings: Yes, to a certain extent that is true. There was also the fact that it was not a "real job" which was still a requirement and is actually increasingly a requirement for me. And it was certainly not harmful. It's hard enough to do to find some way of making money that isn't harmful.

COOK Report: So by the fall of 1993 then you are providing a suite of services using devices similar to Netblazers (but considerably cheaper than those products) to attach people to the Internet? What was the next logical development?

Jennings: Well there was a lot of nasty earlier detail. By the spring of '93 we were up to 15 to 20 sites. Reliability was going up. If a machine crashed, within hours I'd usually have it up again. We were developing accountability, documentation and billing. During this time Gilmore said to Rick Adams every now and then: there's been no real policy on how we use our connection to you, is our expansion OK? Rick never responded to John's questions. It was like he wasn't getting the messages. At this point Steve Crocker and TIS were getting really nervous. We have a mail list for all our customers. Rick Adams was also on this list. Discussion of whether we were now reselling in a way that UUNET would not approve of started spilling onto the mailing list. Eventually it came to a head, with Gilmore pushing Adams for an answer as to what was OK, what was not. The only unambiguous answer we got was finally: find another service provider please.

Cook Report: How much time did he give you?

Jennings: Oh, no time limit was put on it. We figured that as long as we were making a genuine effort we shouldn't worry about it. And Rick, to his credit, never pushed. We really did make a concerted effort and found that it only took six months. We looked around. We were really naive. We visited Bill Yundt at BARRnet. When we told him we were charging **\$70** a month and generating positive income, his jaw dropped. He offered to absorb us laterally. We went home and realized we wouldn't get anything out of it. So we said, thanks but no thanks. If all we had wanted was for our 15 or 20 users to stay connected it

might have been OK. But that is not what we wanted. We had more activist plans.

So we continued to hunt around, and this is where Randy Bush comes into the story. I had known him for about ten years in working on the Fidonet stuff. He has done this broad-based, international networking for a long time. He had stumbled onto Fidonet on his own and saw it as yet another tool to take networking into far away places. Randy wrote proper documentation for the Fidonet protocols in '85.

It turned out that when we started looking for this service-provider, so was he. He's had an 56 Kbps Internet connection for a long time because of all the stuff he does for NSF.

This was at the end of the summer of 1993 when this Little Garden thing was heating up and becoming this big god-damned monstrosity that it is today - something that sucks up all my time and energy. But at any rate, to get back to the story, we started searching through all the service providers and found out that they wouldn't even talk to us. Eventually we finally talked to Sprint in the Government Systems Division where Randy knew some folks.

We ended up going with Sprint to whom we immediately said we will want to resell. Sprint said you can do what you want with the connection. So we put orders through starting in October of last year and went online with them in November. We transferred from Alternet to Sprint as a T-1 customer with an outage of no more than ten minutes.

The next months were just a blur as we connected a tremendous amount of customers. Except for a single \$10,000 loan, the whole thing has been cash driven. We also got a whole bunch of \$70 a month members to pay for a year's service in advance. That we saw as a nice vote of trust.

COOK Report: Well these people could vote in part because they were now getting a whole new level of reliable professional service?

Jennings: Oh yeah. The modem technology had changed in very desirable ways. One thing I brought with me from the Fidonet world is all the modem stuff. I can make modems work in my sleep. So

making modems work was no problem. Compared to BARRnet we were small and flexible. So people were putting up \$1500 for the first year's service with the reasonable assurance that we'd be around at year's end. Moreover we were now also going to be accountable. You can call me up. I will make that thing work. We'd buy better hardware including a Livingston router. We'd have real CSUs or DSUs - all that kind of stuff. We'd provide customers with a better billing system. The real flow of steady hook-ups started in January 1994 and has been steady ever since.

We started with a POP (Point of Presence) in San Francisco, a 40 mile leased line to Cygnus in Mountain View, and a couple of borrowed routers at each end. The staff was primarily me, but Tim Pozar did a tremendous amount of work, though he had a real job as a radio station engineer. So the last six months have been pretty standard start up stuff. Employees. Office space. All that. But unlike the standard startup we grow at 20 percent per month and have had 25 percent months.

Cook Report: So you have an adequate cash flow?

Jennings: Oh yes, quite. The growth curve is not exactly a straight line actually. It is lumpy as hell in fact. We had an incredible swell of new orders in September and October.

COOK Report: Can you tell us how your services work organizationally? For example Santa Cruz Network. They are a customer?

Jennings: Yes. They are actually a medium to large customer. We had been talking to them since the summer of 1993 to determine what form we wanted to take. Were we going to be a cooperative? This word was used a lot. But I have worked around co-ops and let me tell you, this was never a co-op with a capital "c."

COOK Report: How formally are you organized? Do you have detailed contracts or word-of-mouth and a handshake?

Jennings: Initially it was word of mouth and a handshake. But we have been putting things in writing as we go along. We have a decent and amusing Terms and Agreements document. I should e-

mail it to you. We set out to do there what we never got from Alternet, which is to make explicit what you can and cannot do, as well as what you get and don't get. We want to make it clear first of all that we are putting no limitations whatsoever on the use of the line. You may resell and pass on that ability to resell or not.

COOK Report: What happens when someone down stream needs support? What if it is a customer of one of your resellers?

Jennings: We support our direct customers only. If our customers have customers, they are their responsibility. We, of course, answer reasonable questions and our online docs are free for all, but we don't provide support for downstream sites.

COOK Report: How has your link with Randy Bush evolved in the last year? Is he doing a similar thing in Oregon?

Jennings: Well, he is doing a similar thing in Portland. We figured at the very least that we will share our experiences and pool our resources where possible.

We will continue the no use restrictions. We have already run into people who buy connections from us and resell in our own area. The paradox that terrified Alternet and all the rest of them, we just deal with and thrive on. The new model works to some gigantic degree and by God we'll continue with it. I think that if Sprint and MCI come in and do a bad job, you'll always be able to go around them.

COOK Report: How about your prices? What if I wanted 56 Kbps?

Jennings: It varies according to the class of service. All our prices are on-line in writing. There are no hidden costs. You must buy your own hardware on your side and pay a monthly charge plus an install price. A 56kbps leased line based service is \$325 a month. 56kbps frame relay is \$285 a month and virtual T-1 is \$800 a month. There we are trying to maintain a three or four to one ratio of load to feed. Right now we have two T-1s into Sprint and four additional lines into MCI.

COOK Report: Depending on our physical location, if we were in California and thinking of becoming a customer, we'd

have to pay for a local loop from our router to your nearest point of presence (POP). Right?

Jennings: Every local area is different. In the Bay area LATA you basically go by the mile. Rates are also going to change January 1 and go way up. They are allowing dial tone competition and PAC Bell has had artificially low prices for residential monthly bills. The monthly will probably double and the leased line prices are going to go up but the cost of calls intra-LATA are going to go way down. Right now a call to San Jose, 50 miles away, costs **27 cents** a minute where a call to Boston is **22 to 24 cents** a minute. However, in the Bay area you can get T1 frame relay service for a flat \$667 a month from the Oregon border to south of San Jose and almost to Sacramento. If you are two or three miles from one of our POPs you are better off with a leased line. However, if you are more than five miles away, the frame relay service is a bargain.

We also offer a 56Kbps frame relay service at low committed information rates (CIR) for **\$90** a month. The telco's full name for it is 56Kbps Local Loop Frame Relay 19.2 kilobaud CIR. This means that if the network gets crowded, your 56 Kbps service can slow down to a very reasonable 19.2 kilobaud. It also means that for **\$210** total end to end costs (our prices and the local loop) you can have this service. We are delivering it now and it works great! We have it down to **\$800** on the customer end for the needed equipment.

The T-1 stuff is really good. We have a whole bunch of resellers with T-1 feeds, both frame relay and leased line. We are also working on what we are calling a maximum T-1, which is our name for a T-1 to the national service provider maintained and backed up by us and unshared by anyone else. This would be in the range of **\$2,500 to \$3,500** a month. It is expensive but still cheaper than Alternet, which for the equivalent service wants about **\$7,000** a month!

Cook Report: How does this compare with BARRnet?

Jennings: BARRnet has always had screwball pricing. It depends on who you are.

COOK Report: Well, with BBN buying them out and coming into your area, we

have the impression that they will be serving corporate customers - very often large - who feel comfortable if they work with suits. That these customers expect high reliability and, all other things seeming to be somewhat equal, will prefer working only with "suits." While customers who are very technical in nature and are interested in cost as well as reliability will remain as your very major market base.

Jennings: To some degree that's true. However, we had one customer who was very "corporate" in nature. They are also supplying very corporate customers. They came to us and were a little hesitant at first. But a few months later they came back and said: to tell you the truth when we originally got a connection with the Little Garden we thought we'd be doing so just to get started inexpensively. Soon we'd have the where-with-all to move on to a "real" service provider. And they found that not only were the prices good, the service was fine and when they wanted to move on they found they couldn't because no one else would allow them to resell. So they are still with us.

We find that some things from our Old Days scale work well and some don't. Fully one half to one third of our daily work was involved in domain name service stuff. But then we realized we were not doing it efficiently. We saw that we had given people free rein to do any damn crazy kind of thing they thought of. It was causing us a huge amount of support problems. Consequently we just massively tightened in on what we allow and what we don't.

COOK Report: How do you expect the current CIX donnybrook to effect you?

Jennings: We don't. But if it does we may have to pay the monthly extortion fee until they dry up and go away, or maybe do something useful for members. (We are in fact a paid-up CIX member.)

COOK Report: OK. But since you are a Sprint customer, Sprint seems to indicate that they can take you pretty much anywhere in the Internet that you need to get to. Aren't you confident of their ability to deliver?

Jennings: Yes, but if something unexpected happened and our packets couldn't get through, we'd probably have no choice but to pay the fee. No matter

how much noise comes out of it, joining CIX is simply a business decision: is it a benefit or not? All it's ever been is: "If I am in the internetworking business, is it a wise decision to make my networking more attractive to join the CIX?"

COOK Report: It seems to us that there has been a lot of confusion about what you do actually get when you join the CIX.

Jennings: Yeah. People have actually run wires into the CIX thinking that it was going to be their service provider. They either learn or you don't. But they never went out of the way to tell people who did this the significance of what they were doing. You would have thought it might be polite to say: "Excuse me but do you have another point of connection? You might really want to have some one else as well." Oh well. That's one thing beyond our control.

COOK Report: So the Little Garden connects to one or more Sprint POPs out on the West Coast?

Jennings: That is essentially correct. All our research dating back over the past year has essentially indicated that the CIX interconnect does not get you anywhere that you can just as easily get to from somewhere else.

COOK Report: So are you going to maintain links into both Sprint and MCI?

Jennings: As long as it is a wise business decision to do so. And yes we do think it will be. ♦

The Little Garden
attn: Tom Jennings
3004 16th Street, STE 201
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 487-1920 voice
TomJ@wps.com

INTERNET SLIP HOST LIST

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E WIP Navigator displays the status of your current online WIP session



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WIP buttons with Windows icons
- D Messages**
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- E WIP Navigator**
indicates WIP menu status
- F Status Bar**
shows status of online session and indicates new mail
- G Chat**
live teleconferencing with other members currently online
- H Chat Forum**
choose from multiple forums the one you wish to join
- I Write Mail**
write E-Mail with attached images





GOVERNMENT ACCESS by Jim Warren

NETNET AND GUIDANCE FOR GINGRICH

Most of my progressive friends (we used to call ourselves "liberals" but I'm told that's no-longer cool) are horrified at the specter of the Republicans in general — and House Speaker Newt Gingrich (georgias@hr.house.gov) in particular — taking control of Congress. I feel differently.

I'm willin' to give Gingrich and the 'publicans most of this year to recognizably begin to do better than the Democrats have done in the past two generations. (Remember: A President can't spend any money nor raise any taxes nor enforce any laws nor create nor expand any bureaucracies, except as authorized by Congress.)

In particular, I'm most-interested to see how Newt — who is consorting with Alvin Toffler (author of *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*) about these ideas — implements his proposals to utilize our net-technologies to open up Washington to effective national public oversight, access, grassroots organizing and participation.

He talks the talk, but will he walk the walk?

We're really rather pissed out here in the inconsequential wilderness beyond the District of Columbia's Center of the Known Universe — as too many politico's seem to view it. And we have no more patience.

This column enumerates some of the information related to legislation to which the public needs timely access. But actually, this column is really for Newt and Senate Leader Bob Dole — and for the rest of our Congress-critters. And if ya generally agree with what's said here (though perhaps not with its tone <heh>) — copy this column and send it to Newt and Dole and to your congressional district's Representative and to your state's two Senators, with a note saying, mo'less, "Do this, NOW!"

Just think of the impact if every 2.3 readers of each of the 90,000-or-so copies of this issue of BoardWatch sent those five so-easy-to-create copies by snailmail to Congress!

Here's the message to Newt *et al.*

THE PAST IS PREFACE TO THE FUTURE

What if the year weren't 1994, but was 1894? And some o' them young whipper-snappers were runnin' 'round town in them hyar new-fangled gas-buggy things. They're dangerous, hard-to-steer, break down, scare the horses, and they're much-too-complicated for the little lady of the house to use. They'll never last.

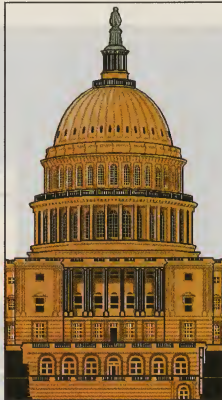
But automobiles quickly and irrevocably changed the entire society — enabling suburbs, demolishing rail transit, creating a national freeway infrastructure, polluting the air, escalating the national debt and justifying the Gulf War. And those few adults who still can't drive are severely restricted and constantly dependent upon others if they are to significantly participate in their communities.

THE KIDS' NEW DATA-ROADS

In early 1993, some new kids named Al and Bill began promoting the most-powerful horseless-carriages — personal computers connected together via the proposed "information superhighways" or NII, National Information Infrastructure. Fifteen-to 30 million people already travel the global computer networks, about two-thirds being in the United States. And for several years, the number has been growing by 5 percent to 10 percent per month.

NEWT BEHIND THE WHEEL

Although the mass-media didn't bother to mention it until after the November elections, Gingrich has



Jim Warren [345 Swett Rd., Woodside CA 94062; (415)851-7075; jwarren@well.com] received the first year Electronic Frontier Foundation Pioneer Award, and more recently the James Madison Freedom-of-Information Award from the Society of Professional Journalists Northern California for helping to make government information freely available online. He is now pushing for similar access to campaign-finance disclosures. He founded *InfoWorld* and the Computers, Freedom & Privacy conferences, was founding host of PBS' television's "Computer Chronicles" and founding Editor of *Dr. Dobbs's Journal*, among other things.

been urging for some time that the coyly-cloistered federal government open itself to citizen oversight and participation via our interconnected tinkertoys. Now Newt has grabbed the keys to the family car, and may show us how really-effective our glorious gadgets can be for remodeling and enhancing our society and putting the People back into the People's government.

Gingrich committed to make all (probably meaning almost-all) House legislative information available via the public computer nets as soon as it's available to legislators and their lobbyists. The California Legislature began doing this last January, and open-government advocates in at least a dozen other states are pushing similar proposals — often using net-based grassroots political pressure to, uh, "encourage" legislators to open their coats and let us peek.

Although it's often said that one should never watch the making of sausage or legislation, we may soon have the ability to see what we've been snarling about for so long, regardless of where we're located. Much more important: We may be able to see it in time to *effectively participate* in the process or our own governance through irresistible grassroots action.

This can change government as much as the automobile changed society — *IF* Gingrich does it right, even more so if the entrenched, elite Senate elders similarly deign to open their doors. (And perhaps someday, even the judicial branch will do the same — below the Supreme Court, which has already made at-least its decisions available online.)

ALL THE "NEWS"

If we are to be a free society, the first prerequisite is that we have timely access to adequate information on which to base informed decisions.

"NewtNet" — as many of us have already called it — should include *timely*, global access to *ALL* of the following, as soon as they are available to congress-critters and their keepers:

- Full-text of all bills and amendments
- All available nonpartisan and partisan bill-analysis

- Congressional committee reports
- Schedules and agendas for committees and all other announced meetings and hearings
- Prepared testimony and handouts (require paid lobbyists to submit it on diskette)
- Bill history (what action has been taken)
- Bill status (what remains for passage)
- All unclassified minutes and transcripts
- Complete records of all motions made and votes taken (including those outrageous "voice votes" that permit House members to avoid being on the record re many crucial decisions, e.g. last October's half-billion-dollar funding for the National Wiretap System)
- The *Congressional Record* (even though it is wildly fictitious since legislators often "revise and extend" their actual remarks before they are published in this official record)
- Transcripts of the House and Senate C-Span programs (which are accurate, even though they cover only a limited portion of all the hearings and events)
- Position-statements by legislators (except those issued within - say - six months before any federal election)
- Abstracts, summaries topic-indices and cross-references for all legislative information
- Reports from the Congressional Research Service (CRS)
- All Library of Congress' computerized files
- All federal statutes, regulations, policies and treaties (even though agency regulations and policies are often Executive-branch information rather than legislative-branch records)
- Proposed budgets plus actual, detailed expenditures, including those of Congress
- Case-law (precedents set by courts, interpreting the meanings of laws — often left intentionally ambiguous by

congress-critters with inadequate backbone; these are judicial-branch records, but nonetheless essential for understanding government practices)

- Legislators' Washington and district-office phone and fax numbers, and snail-mail and electronic-mail addresses (those hiding their Washington fax-numbers — except, of course, from donors and "important" people — aren't *our* representatives)
- Same information for legislative staff, plus descriptions of their areas of expertise and current assignments — easily updated when in computer-form (related professional *vitae* would also help)
- Names and addresses of all registered lobbyists and their disclosed clients, legislative interests, fees received and "contributions" channeled
- *Timely and complete* campaign-finance disclosures and financial-interest statements (already available online from the FEC — Federal Elections Commission — but only for a fee and after some re-keying delay; significant disclosures should be filed with the FEC in computerized form in the first place)
- Descriptions of legislators' interest-areas and personal backgrounds
- Descriptions and tutorials about each committee and its jurisdiction
- Overview of how Congress works in principle
- Practical tutorials about how Congress *really* functions, as would be needed by a new legislator or lobbyist

— among other things.

This must be available in standard, nonproprietary forms — computer text, publication-quality text, financial spreadsheets, database datafiles, graphs, photos, motion video, satellite images, maps, etc. — or must include software to handle non-standard formats.

Anything less — or less-timely — is merely inadequate pretense of public access. And of course, we want it all *now*.

"FREE" (TAX-PREPAID)

This information already exists. Most of it already is computerized at tax-payer expense to meet government needs.

Nonetheless, some agencies charge profit-making fees for access to agency information in its modern, useful (digital) form. But any fees deter not-for-profit citizen-use.

The cost of making this available via the public computer nets is micropennies per item, per computer-owning-citizen. Billing and collecting federal fees would cost much more than the per-user, per-copy access costs. Because of this, and because a timely and fully-informed electorate is an absolute prerequisite to a free society, citizens should have access without federal fees — access to what they've already paid for creating, in its most-useful form.

Congress should declare that such information is in the public domain, permitting unlimited copying, re-distribution and re-use by citizens, non-profit groups and for-profit users. The latter encourages entrepreneurs to add value

in the form of additional analyses, cross-references, indices, printed copies, faxed summaries, automated notifications, and so on — in ways that government agencies couldn't do and shouldn't do.

This mirrors the Clinton-administration policy declared in June, 1993, in the Office of Management and Budget's Circular A-130.

NOW, THE QUESTION IS

Will you take the time to advocate these actions in letters to your elected representatives? Now? Or is it just too inconvenient?

Jim Warren, 1995. May be copied-in-full at any time, in any form, provided this notice is included and no fee is charged for the specific copy nor for a paper publication of which it is a part. ♦

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Rea Andrew Redd lives and works in southwestern Pennsylvania where he manages a high school library, teaches European history and Scholastic Achievement Test preparation. On occasion, he reenacts American Civil War battles with the Ninth Pennsylvania Reserves, an historic, military impression unit. E-mail Rea at: redd@genesis.dug.edu

EDUCATION LINK by Rea Andrew Redd

WHITTLE, ERIC AND CNN: CURRENT EVENTS AND EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM AND THE HOME SCHOOL

“What does this have to do with me?” the student laments. At the high school level, “Why do we have to study this?” has to be answered by most social studies teachers at least several times a year. Making history relevant and answering the student’s honest question can be handled in a variety of ways. Let me digress, for the moment.

The tyranny of the urgent often impresses itself in a multitude of ways upon educators. The day to day curriculum is often formed on the questions: what do the students really need? what is essential for them to have? and how much time can the instructor spend on that which is both needed and essential? Among social studies teachers in the field of American history, the following are often heard: “It’s Christmas and I haven’t got the Civil War fought yet”; or “I always try to teach the Battle of Saratoga around its anniversary, October 17.” For about 185 days and in 40 to 50 minute segments, American students get educated in one thing or another.

With these time constraints in mind we should reconsider how to answer the student’s lament. Lessons must be relevant in the students’ eyes; what they are learning must somehow be related to their futures. When they ask the “why do we have to study . . .” question, we can assume that they are looking for an honest answer. Now there are new ways to answer that question, honestly.

The advent of Whittle Communications’ seventh through twelfth grade news program, Channel One has changed the face of current events and social studies education in the classroom. Produced for students, Channel One News has an explosive, positive and thoughtful approach to current news for that captive audience which buys M&Ms, Clearasil and Sega. With a current lineup of seven young adult women and men, Channel One is a daily, 12 minute, headline and feature news program that has something for every student motivation level.

Whether a correspondent is being shot at by snipers in Bosnia, getting interviews with masked rural guerrillas in Mexico, investigating teen pregnancy and homelessness in the states or covering win streaks in high school sports, Channel One News has managed in the four years of its existence to put together a popular, educationally sound, and sharp-looking televised news program for the under-18 audience. Those homeschooling parents whose school districts receive Channel One News broadcasts via the local television cable and school satellite

dish, should request weekly video copies from the library media specialist or television media instructor.

ERIC, as we briefly discussed science lesson plans in the January issue, is the federal Department of Education’s information database. Existing long before the electronic revolution, ERIC has admirably stayed in the forefront in the collection and dissemination of education materials and scholarship information. When you gopher or telnet eric.syr.edu type gopher to log in as an AskERIC guest; hit the enter or return key at the password: prompt. For an FTP session, [ftp to eric.syr.edu](http://ftp.eric.syr.edu) then login as anonymous. Open Lesson Plans and there will be 16 items from which to choose. Select CNN Newsroom Daily Lesson Plans and Lesson plans for the last 30 calendar days will be offered on the screen. New ways to teach world history, American history, geography and current events will unfold electronically before your eyes.

A program rundown with story order, title and times in minutes and seconds will show you exactly how CNN has put together their ten minute daily news feature. Record the thirteen and a half minute feature and play it for the students. In the classroom, the easiest way to handle this ten minute feature in the classroom is either on an alternate day or on a weekly basis. Any part of the CNN lesson plan is independent of the whole. You have a lesson plan which includes questions for a brief discussion, lecture notes for a brief presentation or outline, a list of pertinent vocabulary words and even worksheets. The CNN lesson plans have motivational questions for the day’s lesson and preview questions on upcoming features such as cars of the future and their safety. Charts, graphs and worksheets can be printed right off your computer’s monitor screen if you wish to use them.

Now wait a moment. Just a few minutes ago I acknowledged that teachers work under the tyranny of the urgent. Didn’t I just create another 20 minutes of work for an instructor who already has probably two different courses, three to six times a day? No I didn’t; get the librarian or the computer lab instructor to open AskERIC and print off the lesson plan. Oh, are we making more work for those teachers, also? No. Are there those students who show up a half hour before the starting bell, who are computer literate and who are looking for something to do? They would be honored to get this special assignment from the teacher. “Go to the computer when you come in, telnet to ERIC, choose CNN

Lesson Plans and print from the monitor's screen the ten to 12 pages of the daily lesson plan." I am sure there must be at least a half dozen students in every school building in the United States who would love to have that special responsibility and relationship with a faculty member. OK, so throw in some bonus points or drop the lowest test score to add a concrete reward for the student. Besides, you are going to ask the television teacher or the librarian to make you a video copy of the CNN news broadcast, aren't you?

On the other hand, you may just get up an extra half hour earlier in the morning and make your own video copy from your tv and print out your own CNN lesson plans from AskERIC. Coffee, Internet and CNN news in the early morning? Not a bad thing to try.

CYBERPORN OFFENDERS GET JAIL; EDUCATORS GET EDUPAGE

Cyberporn Offenders Get Jail, European Utilities Eye Telephone Business, GATT Signals A Win for Computer Industry, IBM Wants to Be Your Internet and Canadians Lacking in Skills for New Technologies have what in common?

These and six other stories appeared in a current issue of *Edupage*, a summary of news items on information technology; this electronic digest is provided three times each week as a service by Educom, a Washington-based consortium of colleges and universities. With the stated purpose of seeking to transform education through the use of information technology, *Edupage* offers about ten computer monitor screens of news. Using newspapers and magazines ranging from *Business Week* to *The Wall Street Journal*, *Edupage* condenses into less than 100 words each about a dozen news stories concerning information technology. If your interest goes deeper than one hundred words, the stories bibliographic citation is given.

To subscribe to *Edupage* send a message to: listproc@educ.com and in the body of the message type: **subscribe edupage** Bill Clinton (assuming that your name is Bill Clinton; if it isn't, substitute your own name); if you ever wish to cancel this subscription, send a message to: listproc@educ.com and in the body of the message type: **unsubscribe edupage**. If you want a similar magazine then subscribe to *Educom Review*, a bi-monthly print magazine on learning,

communication and information technology. Send e-mail to offer@educ.com; or call (800)254-4770. Introductory subscriptions are \$18 a year. *Educom Update* is a twice-a-month electronic summary of organizational news and events. To subscribe send a message to listproc@educ.com and in the body of the message type: **subscribe update** and your name.

AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

The federal Rural Electrification Administration's (REA) next grant deadline is October 14 for grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$500,000; the REA awards these funds for projects using computer networks and telecommunications in the school classroom. School districts and nonprofit organizations that operate libraries or schools can apply for funds to purchase equipment or software. Call the REA at (202)720-9552, ask for Blaine Stockton and request an application.

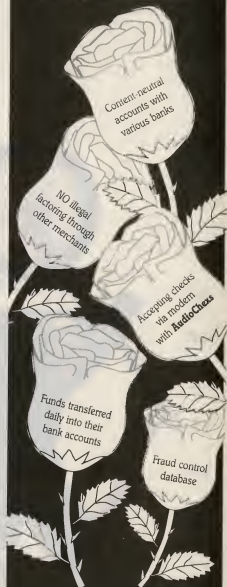
Educators from the Great Lakes states can be awarded from \$3,000 to \$5,000 for the creative use of technology in the school classroom. Instructors from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin can apply for portions of the \$400,000 that the Pioneering Partners for Education Technology administrators. Applications must be received by April 15, 1995; attn Mary Kinney; (317)896-6494 voice; mkinney@greatlinks.cic.net e-mail.

How to Get Connected to the Internet: Facts and Funding offers educators tips on how to find money and how to get connected to the Internet. Many have despaired for funds to pay for the technology needed to bring the Internet to a school district; the planning and funding of a connection, and the sources for funds are concisely presented in this publication from Wentworth World Wide Media (WWM). In 14 pages, WWM outlines the basics of connectivity and the dollars it takes to obtain it; this publication is detailed enough to lead you to more questions but not so jargon laden that it is boring to the non-Internet enthusiast. It appears appropriate for teachers, administrators and school board members who need a quick handle on the basics of connections and cash. WWM is located at 1866 Colonial Village Lane, Lancaster, PA 17605; (800)638-1639 voice; (717)393-5752 fax; connect@wentworth.com e-mail. ♦

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Full Text Searching

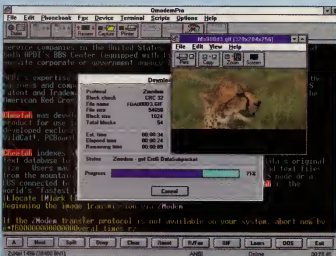
Need to add powerful full path text searching software to your business BBS? Cheetah is the solution!

Cheetah was designed by APDI, a leader in the BBS service industry. APDI listened to corporations, associations and government agencies who need a simple full text searching software to work with their BBS. From these talks APDI designed and developed Cheetah.

Cheetah enables you to search online for any combination of words in seconds! Cheetah lets your users access large amounts of data quickly and easily.

Cheetah also performs phrase and proximity searches. Users can specify word proximity within a paragraph or sentence and the file viewer conveniently highlights all found text.

Unlike other full text searching software, Cheetah was specifically designed for BBSs. Cheetah keeps track of users' time left on the BBS, mode settings, modem status and even allows users to download their search results using any compression software they choose.



Cheetah handles text and images — newsletters, magazines, even government regulations!

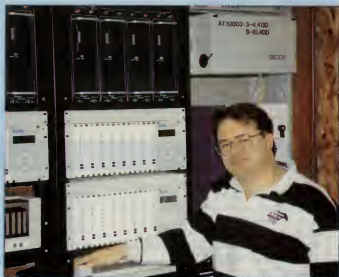
Cheetah is available in both serial port and Digibord versions and works out of the box on Novell networks. Cheetah comes with an unlimited user license per BBS.

New Cheetah 1.5 version now shipping

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So if you work for a corporation, association or government and run a BBS, or just have the task of building one, call APDI at 1-800-785-APDI and find out more about Cheetah's ability to give your users what they need.



Mark Burnett at APDI's BBS Service Bureau

"The BBS Service Bureau"

Companies looking for a serious BBS company to provide a wide range of services are choosing APDI. APDI is devoted to providing professional BBS services to corporations, associations and government agencies throughout the United States.

Typical APDI clients are organizations that need turnkey BBS solutions or advanced technical on-site support. APDI provides installation and support for WildCat!, Galaticomm, PCBoard, TBBS, and Searchlight. APDI is a Certified Mustang Software Integrator (CMSI).

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Most of APDI's corporate customers find it advantageous to let APDI run the BBS for them at APDI's location. APDI provides all equipment (like the BBS center shown above) and handles all technical support and navigation issues on your BBS. APDI's fiber-optic cabling ensures crystal clear connections and communications to your bulletin board system.

Many businesses wish to put a database online but find it difficult to locate programmers with the skills to assist them. APDI has a skilled database development staff and is on the FoxPro and Paradox development teams.

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BOARDWATCH

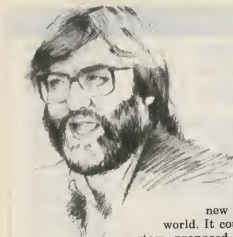
List of BBS List Keepers



This listing comprises a list of those who compile and maintain lists of bulletin boards, either by topical category, or by some geographic area or definition - often by area code. The primary bulletin board system where the list can be downloaded electronically is also included.

BBSLIST TOPIC	AUTHOR/EDITOR	CONTACT BBS	TELEPHONE
New Jersey BBS's	Scott Drake	T.E.R.N. BBS	(201)399-4772
Connecticut AC 203	Kevin Brook	Creative Edge BBS	(203)743-4044
BBS With Handicapped Focus	Bill McGarry	Handicap News BBS	(203)926-6168
Known Networks	Victor Laking	Generic BBS	(204)475-5199
Manitoba, Canada List AC 204	Victor Laking	Generic BBS	(204)475-5199
Seattle AC 206/West Washington	Bob Dinse/Nanook	Eskimo North	(206)367-3837
Tacoma Washington AC 206	Richard Langsford	AmoCat BBS	(206)566-1155
Puget Sound Area	Art Tomlin	Orion Station	(206)675-0565
Kitsap County Washington	Michael Schuyler	Quicksilver BBS	(206)780-2011
Maine 207	Scott R. Bodeen	Street Corner BBS	(207)442-0997
Modesto, CA BBS List	Chris Mitchell, "Gomba"	Anything Goes	(209)491-0782
Central California AC 209	Jack Porter/Madera UG	Zen Den Systems	(209)675-8436
San Antonio TX (AC 210) BBS	Donna Murrell	Main Complex BBS	(210)658-8009
Graphical User Interface BBS	David Shapiro	The Goosy (GUI) BBS	(212)876-5885
96 List - 9600+bps BBS	Ken Sukimoto	Downtown BBS	(213)484-0260
Employment BBS's	George Smith	Executive Connection	(214)306-3393
Dallas/Ft.Worth BBS List	Mark Elson/Mike Shockley	Blues Cafe	(214)638-1181
Open Access UNIX Site List	Phil Eschallier	LGNP1 (login:BBS)	(215)348-9727
Cleveland Area 216	Jim Barry	Flip Flop	(216)951-9134
Educational BBSs	Joe McIntosh	KSI Public BBS	(219)626-2150
Educational and Indiana BBS	Joe McIntosh	KSI Public BBS	(219)626-2150
Conservation/Nature BBS List	D. Wendling/JS Christianso	Coin of the Realm	(301)585-6697
Ham/Amateur Radio BBS	Stan Staten	3WINKS BBS	(301)590-9629
Handicapped Issues BBS	Richard Barth	HEX BBS	(301)593-7357
Desktop Publishing BBS	Frank Atlee	Infinite Perspective	(301)924-0398
Delaware AC 302	Vince Boehm/Dave Osburn	Talk Radio BBS	(302)429-7667
Colorado AC 303/719	Willis Morrow	Big Boy's BBS	(303)458-3832
Cave Exploration BBSs	Douglas L. Moore II	The CatEye BBS	(304)592-3390
South Florida Area 305/407	Eric Thav	Silicon Beach BBS	(305)474-6512
Southern California	Mike Heffernan	SOCAL Corner	(310)422-7942
California AC 310	Jim Walton	Illusions BBS	(310)804-3324
Detroit Area 313	Horst Mann	Tony's Corner	(313)754-1131
St. Louis AC 314	Beth Brooks	Fire Escape's Dir.	(314)741-9505
ASP BBS Member List	Richard Heller	The RoadHouse BBS	(317)784-2147
Engineering Related BBS	Arthur Petrzella	Computer Plumber	(319)337-6723
Rhode Island Area 401	Mike Labbe	Eagle's Nest	(401)732-5292
Alberta AC 403	Stephen Decarie	T-8000	(403)246-4487
Calgary Alberta AC 403	Jeremy Birkett	The Quantum BBS	(403)252-5119
Atlanta Area 404	Online Atlanta Society	OASIS	(404)627-2662
Atlanta Area 404	Rodney Aloia	The INDEX System	(404)924-8472
Montana Area	Jay Michalik	Valley Light BBS	(406)273-6399
Searchlight BBS Systems	Chad Payne	Montana MediaNet	(406)549-6325
Orlando BBS List AC 407	Lenny Lacuy	Infinite Space Onlin	(407)856-0021
San Francisco Bay Area	Mark Shapiro	BABBA BBS	(408)946-8532
Baltimore BBS Area 410	David Fogle	Silver Streak BBS	(410)254-3400
Pittsburgh AC 412	Chas Stokes	Zui's Catacombs	(412)264-9787
National BBS List	DP McIntire/Beth Spotts	Ameribroad	(412)349-6862
Milwaukee Area 414	Mark G.	The Castle	(414)327-5085
North America Nudist List	Patrick O'Brien	Natural Connection	(414)426-2110
Toledo Ohio Area 419/313	Ryck Zarick	Toledo's TBBS	(419)475-2241
Arkansas Area 501	Bob Underdown	The Blue & The Grey	(501)444-8420
Louisville KY and South IN	Tim Arnold	Dance of Shiva BBS	(502)893-6360
Portland Oregon BBS	Lisa Gronke	DawGone Disgusted	(503)297-9145
New Orleans AC 504	Darin Celino	Southern Belle BBS	(504)455-9488
New Mexico Area Code (505)	Dan Kiehl	MDC Computers BBS	(505)434-0258

BBSLIST TOPIC	AUTHOR/EDITOR	CONTACT BBS	TELEPHONE
Apogee/ID/Software Crtns List	Dan Linton	Software Creations	(508)368-7139
PCBoards on Internet	Ruben Melo	ponyXpress BBS	(508)587-7669
Worcester MA AC (508)	Jim Metzler	Miwok Village BBS	(508)754-6512
Corpus Christi	James Cordani	Treasure Island	(512)241-8358
Austin Area BBS List AC 512	John Foster	Camel's Back BBS	(512)243-0077
Selected BBS	Joseph Caplinger & Son	J&J's BBS	(513)236-1229
AC 516 Free Shareware BBS	Harold Stein	Long Island Exchange	(516)271-5303
516 AC, 800 numbers, Freenets	Wilton Virgo	Long Island BBS	(516)338-8595
Area Code 517 - Mid-Michigan	Rick Rosinski/SAMM	Wolverine BBS	(517)695-9952
Phoenix AC (602)	John Mendivil	Majestic Royalty BBS	(602)278-1651
Phoenix AC (602)	Sue Widemarak	Cheese Whiz BBS	(602)279-0793
Cochise County Arizona	Kevin McCrory	The Commo Shack BBS	(602)452-0587
Arizona and Southwest U.S.	Michael	BBSouthWest	(602)820-7861
New Hampshire BBS's	Mike Maggl	Marios Birdhouse	(603)226-0467
Victoria/Vancouver AC 604	Mark Morley	Island Net	(604)477-5163
Kentucky AC (606)	Jon Hagee	Kentucky Explorer	(606)271-1451
Wisconsin 608	Jim Wargula	JW-PC Dataflex.HST	(608)837-1923
New Jersey AC 609	Dave Schubert	The Casino BBS	(609)485-2380
Real Estate Boards	Ted Kraiss	Dreammakers Online	(609)587-4651
New Jersey Area 201/609/908	Wayne R. Morton	Praedo BBS	(609)953-0769
Medical Issues BBS	Edward Del Grosso	Black Bag	(610)454-7396
Job Search and Inet hot list	Ward Christman	Online Opportunities	(610)873-7170
Minnesota Twin Cities AC 612	Barry Watson	Abiogenetic BBS	(612)774-8454
Apple II BBS	Mike Shecket	Way Out	(614)436-4846
Tennessee AC 615/901	unknown	SPDA Info Service	(615)952-5638
Business/Professional BBS	Dennis Hauser	Delight The Customer	(616)662-0393
Female Sysops	Brenda Donovan	The Pacific Rim	(619)278-7361
San Diego, CA AC 619	Tom Grigg	ComputerEdge	(619)573-1675
San Diego AC 619	Joe Nicholson	General Alarm	(619)669-0385
Apple II BBS with Internet con	Morgan Davis	pro-sol	(619)670-5379
Virginia AC 703/804	Eddie Gebhard	PC Power House	(703)348-1423
OS/2 BBS Systems	Pete Norloff	OS2/Shareware BBS	(703)385-4325
Genealogy Related BBS	Richard A. Pence	NGS-CIG	(703)528-2612
Charlotte, NC AC 704	Blaine Schmidt	Moobasi Optics, Ink	(704)541-9842
Indigenous People BBSs	Arthur McGee	BDFP BAC BBS	(707)552-3314
Black Run/Oriented BBS	Arthur "Rambo" McGee	BDFP BAC BBS	(707)552-3314
Chicago	Peter Anvin	Royal Swedish Viking	(708)491-9036
Gay & Lesbian BBS List	Billy Kennedy	Risqilly BBS	(708)495-6609
Airline Pilot/JUMPSEAT BBSs	Rex Chadwell	ChicAgo Hangar	(708)980-1613
Houston Area 713	David E. Wachenschwanz	Atomic Cafe BBS	(713)530-8875
Korean BBSs	Wayne Jeong	Korea America Online	(714)449-9373
Area Code 715 BBS's	Corey Koltz	YES It's another BBS	(715)345-7132
Rochester NY AC 716	Tracy Logan	Logan's Run	(716)328-2914
RIP BBS Listing	Mario Mueller	Antarctica BBS	(717)755-2440
717 AC BBS Listing	Adam Viener	Cyberia	(717)840-1444
Vermont BBS's	Russ Boyce	Computer Ser. of Ver	(802)334-7976
Ecology/Conservation BBS	Bob Chapman	EarthArt BBS	(803)552-4389
Central California Area 805	Larry Honore	His Board	(805)652-1478
Wildcat! BBS	John Harner	Wildcat! HQ	(805)873-2400
Oahu Hawaii	Brent Davis	Land's End BBS	(808)499-2527
Technical Support BBS List	Gary Barr	Digicom BBS	(812)479-1310
Pinellas/Tampa Florida AC 813	Emery Mandel	Mercury Opus	(813)321-0734
Kansas City Area 816/913	Bob Zumbrunnen	PC-HELP BBS	(816)331-4703
Dalls Fort Worth BBS List	Mark Robbins	Second Sanctum	(817)467-1175
Occult BBS	Phil Hansford	Mysteria	(818)353-8891
Commodore 64/128/Amiga BBS	John Rigali	Night Gallery	(818)448-8529
Texarkana BBS List	Rodney Payne	Internet Connection	(903)737-7173
Internet accessible BBS's	Richard S. Mark	Dragon Keep	(904)374-3500
Durham Region-Ontario Canada	Shawn Berry	Seventh Dimension	(905)571-6052
Alaska AC 907	Patti Johnson	Alaska Pirate Soc.	(907)248-9364
Travel Related BBSs	Robert Southwick	AK Information Cache	(907)373-3205
Kansas 913 Area Code BBS's	Chuck Baslock	On-Line Connection	(913)587-0241
Darwin National USBBS List	Bob Breedlove	Bob's BBS	(916)829-7511
OS/2 Related BBS	Dave Fisher	LiveNet 1:170/110	(918)481-5715
Tulsa Oklahoma Area BBS List	Linda Hargraves	ACCESS AMERICA	(918)747-2542
Raleigh NC Area Code 919	Mike Stroud	Micro Message Svc.	(919)779-6674
National ISDN BBS list	Ken Morrison	Digital Velocity BBS	(919)992-3059
Republic of South Africa	Henk Wolsink	Catalyst BBS	27-41-34-1122
Switzerland BBS List	Cesar Keller	The Warehouse BBS	41-1-492-5157



Lance Rose is an attorney practicing high-tech and information law in Montclair, N.J. with the firm Lance Rose & Associates. He can be found on the Internet at elrose@well.com, and on CompuServe at 72230,2044. He is also author of NetLaw, the legal guide for online service providers, published by Osborne/McGraw-Hill and available at better book stores everywhere.

LEGALLY ONLINE

by Lance Rose

LEGAL EVENTS ON THE NET — WHAT DO THEY MEAN??

Every month or so now, we read news about a major new legal event affecting the online world. It could be a police raid on a porn system, proposed laws affecting our electronic privacy rights or an online harassment case. Watching these legal fights can be fun, like watching fireworks (unless you're one of the fighters). But beyond the fanfare, what do these fights mean for the development of online society? If a given struggle is resolved in a court decision, or a new law passed, how will the course of online events be affected, if at all? Or if a given struggle is not resolved, ending in a quiet settlement or in a law not passed, what might that mean? Is it only the passing of a single battle, or are there pressing social or business issues which might have been resolved in that struggle, but will now have to wait until the next one puts them once again into play?

Unfortunately, we're not getting much help from the mainstream news media in answering these questions. They hop from event to event like rocks skipping across the surface of a pond, issuing breathless reports of the latest cyberfights, with a quote or two from the experts to add depth to their stories. Most of the reporters working the online beat are newcomers to the online world. And many of their quoted pundits, the guys who supposedly will tell us what it all means, never went online a minute in their lives. The result is a stream of exciting news stories with little conceptual coherence, and no analysis of the underlying trends beyond the first thing that popped into someone's head at the moment they were writing or being quoted.

This month we'll go beyond the news-of-the-minute and look at the meaning of a recent online development: the \$200 million lawsuit against Prodigy. We'll look at what this legal event means, and what it doesn't mean, despite breathless news reports to the contrary. There's a lot brewing just slightly beneath the surface of daily online events. The more familiar we become with these trends, the more we might be able to see the future coming before it conks us on our heads.

PRODIGY SLAPPED WITH A LIBEL SUIT

It finally happened. In early November, 1994, the Prodigy online service got slapped with a lawsuit for libel by investment banking firm Stratton Oakmont. They claim a Prodigy user named David Lusby posted a message accusing Stratton Oakmont and its president of fraud in taking public a company named Solomon Page in October. They seek damages of \$100

million for the injuries to their business and are asking for an additional \$100 million in punitive damages. Part of the theory of damages, it seems, is that every one of the million or two users claimed by Prodigy had a look at the libelous posting, and got the wrong idea about Stratton Oakmont and the Solomon Page, ruining both companies' reputations.

Apparently, "David Lusby," was the name of a Prodigy employee. This lent some sense to Prodigy being sued, as his employer, for his public posting badmouthing others. Only it seems that Lusby was a former employee who had left Prodigy years ago, and no longer had use of that i.d. Subsequently, the parties agreed to let Lusby out of the case, and let it proceed only against Prodigy. There is little more known about the case publicly at the time of this writing.

WHAT THE PRODIGY CASE DOES NOT MEAN

The press and their pundits are labeling the Prodigy case a major new development in online libel cases. In fact, it's nothing of the kind, and is simply the latest in a series of such cases. In the past few years, we have seen at least four major online libel cases started up: Cubby v. CompuServe, Medphone v. DeNigiris, Epitope v. Kripke and Suarez v. Meeks. They all raised the same basic defamation issues as the new Prodigy case: what counts as an online defamation? Who is a public figure for online purposes? Do online statements affect the physical world strongly enough to create real injury? Unfortunately, none of the earlier cases answered these questions; Medphone and Suarez were settled, and Epitope and the remnants of the Cubby case are still in progress. But the Prodigy case hasn't answered those questions yet either. It's just another online defamation lawsuit at its earliest stages, with a strong chance of being settled before it settles any questions of online law. The most notable thing about it at this stage is the sheer size of the claims — \$200 million all told. As exciting as all those dollars may be to the mainstream press, they do not transform the Prodigy case into some new kind of online lawsuit.

WHAT THE PRODIGY CASE DOES NOT MEAN

Much of the commentary on the Prodigy case says it raises a groundbreaking new legal question: can an online service be held responsible for libel by one of its users? That certainly is an important question, but it's no longer new. That's precisely the question first considered a few years ago by a federal judge in the landmark case Cubby v. CompuServe case. He

decided CompuServe was not liable, and let it out of the lawsuit. This decision was a major boost for online services large and small. It recognized their valuable social role of distributing the speech of their users, and held that the First Amendment protects online services from absolute legal responsibility for everything on the system. The Prodigy case simply re-addresses the same issues, the only major question being: will it follow the result in the Cubby case, or go down a different path?

WHAT THE PRODIGY CASE DOES MEAN

As we just mentioned, Cubby v. Compuserve was a groundbreaking lawsuit, recognizing strong First Amendment protection for online system. But that ruling is already under attack. The first crack in the edifice was little more than a whimper: a comment tossed off by the judge in the online copyright infringement case Playboy v. Frena, where he said that an online service can be responsible for copyright infringement by its users, even if the system operator is not aware of the users' activities. Reading the case shows this statement was little more than a technical aside, since it's clear the system operator knew about the infringements in question. He had even encoded advertisements for his system into the infringing pictures. Playboy v. Frena may not have much influence on future legal decisions, but the judge's comment has the attorneys for the national online services concerned.

A much bigger, direct attack on the Cubby result was launched several months ago, with CompuServe again the target, in Frank Music v. CompuServe. In Frank Music, which is still ongoing, 140 music publishers are seeking to hold CompuServe responsible for its users' uploading and downloading infringing music files on the system. The publishers aren't even bothering to sue any individual CompuServe users, even though they are the direct infringers. They're going directly after CompuServe, to try and establish that it can be held liable for millions of dollars of infringement damages caused by the users. If the music publishers succeed, it would effectively reverse much of the First Amendment protection CompuServe achieved in the Cubby case just a few short years ago, and leave all online systems and bulletin boards far more exposed to legal damages of all kinds.

In this context, the Stratton Oakmont v. Prodigy case is another major attack against the Cubby result, following in the footsteps of Frank Music. If Stratton Oakmont succeeds in holding Prodigy responsible for a user's defamatory posting, it could reverse much or all of the protection established in Cubby. So the Prodigy case is indeed important for the online world — not as anything new, but as yet another in a series of blows being struck against the legal protection of system operators from responsibility for their users' actions.



PRODIGY CASE ALSO MEANS

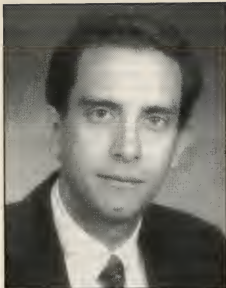
The Prodigy case also points to an entirely different trend in the developing law of online defamation. The previous four online defamation cases, Cubby, Medphone, Epitope and Suarez, were all started by companies which, if not rich, still had enough money to start up a lawsuit. Stratton Oakmont v. Prodigy continues this trend, investment bank Stratton Oakmont being more than capable of funding its suit against Prodigy.

All these lawsuits were started by companies and not individuals. However, individuals are also libeled all the time on the Net, possibly far more often than companies. Why don't they sue, too? The answer is that most people who are libeled online simply can't afford to take the wrongdoer to court.

Deprivation of a court remedy does not mean there is no remedy, though. In fact, every Net user who is the target of an online libel, whether rich or poor, has something better than the courts at their disposal: using the Net as a reply medium for their response. With the mass communications power that the Net puts at everyone's fingertips, libel victims today are defending their reputations and setting the record straight in the very same forums in which they were attacked. They don't need the courts anymore. Granted, an online correction of a libelous posting will not put money in the libel victim's pocket the way a winning lawsuit can, but it is a far more direct way to achieve the ultimate goal rarely inaccurately served by such lawsuits and their catchall reduction of all injuries to sums of money: correcting the injury to reputation caused by online libels.

Despite the power of online self-help in correcting libel problems, the courts will continue to decide high-stakes defamation matters. Companies who can afford lawsuits will always use the courts to bludgeon those who say things they don't like, or in Prodigy's case, those who maintain public forums where others say things they don't like. But in many ways this approach, exemplified by Stratton Oakmont v. Prodigy, is becoming outmoded, a rarefied form of high-stakes gambling drifting ever further away from the realities of online speech. Ironically, the mass communications power and the accessibility of the Net puts those who don't resort to the courts in a better position to actually protect their reputations against online libel.

In other words, instead of being a groundbreaking new lawsuit, the case against Prodigy is in large part a legal dinosaur. It asks the court not to fix the libel, but to make the injuries to Stratton Oakmont's reputation feel better by applying money to the wound — \$200 million worth. If Stratton Oakmont was really concerned about the injury to its reputation, it might have been better off if it did not have the money to sue. Then, it would have been forced into the only course of action available to most Net users: replying to the libel online, and setting the record straight in front of the same audience that saw the original damaging statements. ♦



OTHER PEOPLE'S E-MAIL: TO READ OR NOT TO READ?

by Pete Kennedy

A lot of confusion remains regarding who can properly and legally read electronic mail, and under what circumstances. Most of the questions arise about mail not addressed to you. Can I read it? When? Can I show it to others? When? Systems administrators are especially concerned — do they have the right to read mail passing through their systems just for the fun of it? For more legitimate reasons? What would be a legitimate reason?

There is a complex federal statute dealing with the privacy of electronic mail, but it does not answer all the questions. Neither can this article, but the goal is to lay out some general principles about reading other people's mail, to cover some of the basic situations. More complicated scenarios, or new twists, will require more thinking.

A simple rule: For several reasons, the wisest course for *everyone*, sysops and system users alike, is to treat electronic mail like Postal Service mail and telephone calls: if the letter or call is not for you, don't snoop unless you have the permission of at least one of the parties. If in doubt, don't. Simple enough. You can rarely get in trouble for not reading someone else's mail.

What laws govern? The principal law regulating access to electronic communications (including e-mail) is a federal statute, applicable nation-wide, popularly known as the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (or "ECPA" for short). The ECPA amended

the Wiretap Act to include electronic communications with its previous provisions regarding oral and wire (telephone) communications. The ECPA also added a brand-new section governing access to *stored* electronic communications (the "Stored Communication" provision).¹ A U.S. Court of Appeals recently explained that Congress intended these two sections of the ECPA to handle different situations — the Wiretap Act governs interception of data in the act of transmission, and the Stored Communication provision governs access to electronic communications in storage. Although this distinction gets thin in certain situations, it is a good working model. There has been very little guidance from the courts so far in interpreting the application of the ECPA and other laws to e-mail, and so any conclusions in this article should be taken for what they are, and no more — informed guesses. The particular facts of any given situation will always be very important.

The Wiretap Act. The Wiretap Act prohibits anyone from intercepting electronic communications, or knowingly disclosing or using intercepted communications. Intercepting means simply to "acquire the contents" of the e-mail message. There are some exceptions: (1) if you are a party to the communication (of course); (2) you are not a party, but a party to the communication has given consent; (3) if the systems administrator is acting "in the normal course of his employment while engaged in any activity which is a necessary incident to the rendition of his service or to the protection of the rights or property of the provider of that service" (but *not* "service observing or random monitoring"); and (4) if there is a court order authorizing the interception. 18 U.S.C. § 2511(2).

The Wiretap Act also specifically prohibits systems administrators from divulging the contents of an electronic communication, while in transmission, to anyone other than the addressee or intended recipient, which means the systems administrator cannot pass e-mail on to someone else, even if the administrator does not get a copy of the mail. There are exceptions here, too: A systems administrator may forward mail (1) with the permission of a party to the communication; (2) under court order; (3) to a forwarding facility; or (4) to law enforcement, if the communication appears to pertain to the commission of a crime, (and the communication was inadvertently obtained by the service provider).

Stored Communications. All bulletin board e-mail residing in a storage device — whether permanently or temporarily incident to transmission — is covered by the Stored Communications provisions of the ECPA, 18 U.S.C. § 2701, *et seq.* These provisions protect e-mail from two things: (1) unauthorized access, alteration and disruption, and (2) unauthorized disclosure. 18 U.S.C. § 2701, § 2702. The first provision prohibits "hacking"-type activity, the second protects the privacy of the mail from disclosure to unintended recipients without authorization.

This provision has similar exceptions for disclosing e-mail as found in the Wiretap Act, described above.

If you violate the ECPA. If you intercept, disclose, use, obtain, alter, prevent access to, or divulge electronic communications in violation of the ECPA, you have committed a crime. Not only that, you can get sued in civil court, and end up paying the lawyer who sues you. This makes the safer course *not* to read mail if unsure — especially because the ECPA is not the only law out there.

The important exceptions. Anyone can read or pass along e-mail with the consent of one of the parties. Systems administrators need not worry about forwarding messages, or reading messages that "bounce" in order to figure out what to do with them.

Sysops may also review messages as a "necessary incident" (1) "to the rendition of his service" or (2) "to the protection of the rights or property of the provider of that service." There is some debate on the breadth of these exceptions. No court case has discussed how they apply to BBSs. Prudent systems administrators should read these exceptions narrowly. The whole point of the ECPA indicates that these exceptions are *not* a license to read users' mail at will, or even to spot-check to see if users are up to no good. The law says that the systems administrator "shall not utilize service observing or random monitoring except for mechanical or service quality control checks." Any spot-checking must be to monitor the system's *functioning*, not the users' activities.

What if a systems administrator has specific information that a certain user might be using e-mail to discuss or even facilitate a crime? Does that justify nosing through the user's e-mail? Again, I believe only very narrow circumstances could justify it. The systems administrator is no more

responsible for criminal plots in e-mail than Ma Bell is for telephone conspiracies. For that reason, the law need not give the administrator a private-cop badge to rifle through e-mail and monitor for any signs of crime. Because the ECPA permits a systems administrator to disclose to the police the contents of an e-mail message that was *inadvertently* obtained and which appears to pertain to the commission of a crime, this strongly implies that *intentional* sleuthing by systems administrators is forbidden.

If a systems administrator has specific information that a user is about to damage the system or crash the service, say with a virus, the systems administrator could justify reviewing that user's e-mail as a protection to the system. The harder case is if the administrator suspects that a user's actions might be criminal, but the only threat to the system is that it might get seized by law enforcement on account of the user. (Most BBS crime poses no other threat to the system, as it usually depends on the system's continued functioning). Here, the administrator might argue that the threat of a seizure of the system (and the resulting loss of property) justifies reading the suspected user's e-mail. At minimum, however, the ECPA's specific prohibition of random monitoring would require the systems administrator to have good, solid evidence against the user, not just a vague suspicion or anonymous claims that something bad is going on.

A good point of reference: Remember that the same laws protecting electronic communications generally apply to BBSs and telephone companies alike. Most people would like to see Ma Bell's right to monitor phone calls be as narrow as possible. And consider the voice mail services that phone companies now offer — they are not that different than e-mail, are they?

Trying to avoid these rules. Some systems administrators still try to avoid the ECPA's restrictions on their curiosity by posting disclaimers such as "NOTICE: This system does not provide private electronic communications" or "WARNING: We read your mail. It is not private." With these warnings, some systems administrators think they can freely read everyone's e-mail. These warnings are a bad idea.

First, they probably won't do the job. While the facts of the particular case will matter, such disclaimers will have a tough time in court. Judges and

juries don't like "take it or leave it" ultimatums when it comes to privacy. The disclaimer probably isn't true, except on small boards: the system almost certainly *does* provide the means to communicate free from all prying eyes except the systems administrator, and on any busy system, the administrator *can't* read all the mail, which may re-create in practice the very expectation of privacy the administrator is trying to deny.

Second, the disclaimers may make things worse. While trying to limit the risk of an ECPA lawsuit by a user, the disclaimer will raise the systems administrator's risks in other areas. An administrator who actually reads his or her user's e-mail can be charged with knowing its content, and this increases the potential for successful civil suits for libel, as well as the danger of criminal prosecution for aiding criminal activity on the BBS. The administrator can always claim "I didn't read that message," but the system's own words say the opposite. Worse, if the system is seized by law enforcement, the systems administrator may lose very helpful allies: the users. When innocent users try to sue the police for violating *their* rights under the ECPA, the police will be sure to defend their acts based on what the system itself told them: "no private e-mail here!" The ECPA should be a great deterrent against the wholesale seizure of BBSs; systems administrators diminish that deterrent by using these disclaimers.

Finally, what possible reason, other than plain rude nosiness, justifies reading other people's mail? The law not only imposes no responsibility to read or monitor mail flowing through a system, it prohibits it. Systems administrators who fear criminal responsibility for what their users are discussing in e-mail are as wrong as if Southwestern Bell was worried about being held responsible for crimes committed over their phone system.

Don't Forget State Privacy Laws. In addition to the federal ECPA, each state has varying laws to protect its citizens' privacy. Some states prohibit the recording of telephone conversations unless *both* parties consent, for instance, which is tougher than federal law. States also have vaguely defined, but real, general civil privacy rights that could be violated by unauthorized reading of electronic mail.

For example, it appears to be generally accepted that the ECPA does not protect the privacy of an employee's e-mail from her employer's snooping

(although it takes some effort to explain why this is probably the case). However, state laws may recognize narrow spheres of privacy at work. An employer who for years provides private, secure electronic communications among its employees may have permitted such a sphere of privacy to develop. If the employer suddenly, without notice, begins reading employee e-mail, it could violate state civil law.

The safer practice for an employer would be to have a clear, written policy stating that company electronic mail is not private, and that the company retains (or is reclaiming) the right to review employee mail. Companies with gateways to outside mail services should be especially clear on their policy, because, rightly or wrongly, employees will have a greater expectation of privacy for personal mail they receive from outside the company, similar to personal letters sent to a work address.

A tough, unanswered question: What about users' personal file directories on Unix machines or BBSs? Many BBSs, Internet providers, and other computer systems provide their users storage areas. Many systems call and treat these areas as "private," and use the storage space as a selling point for their system.

Would a systems administrator violate the ECPA by nosing through a private user's storage area, which commonly contains e-mail? The ECPA protects the privacy of e-mail, but copyright law imposes strict liability for copyright infringement. How does a systems administrator avoid unknowingly harboring infringing computer files without checking these storage areas? The solution *may* lie in the systems administrator getting proper consent from the user, before the fact, to monitor these files, but — as with most tough questions of the application of the ECPA to computer communications — no court has ruled on the question yet.

²These laws can be found at 18 U.S.C. § 2501, *et seq.*, and 18 U.S.C. § 2701, *et seq.*, respectively.

[This article is a revised version of an article that first appeared in *Computer Underground Digest*, Volume 6, Issue 96.]



MACINTOSH NEWS

by Bill Gram-Reefer

1Q UPDATES

Please update your files. In the January issue we noted ASAP, the drag and drop file transfer utility. In that article we noted the company name as Fast Lane, Inc. It appears that the company name and address have been changed to MicroBeam, 11350 66th Street, North, Suite 116, Largo FL 34643; (813) 546-2727 voice; (813)541-3278 fax; microbeam@aol.com Internet.

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Bill has been writing about Macintosh computers since 1984.

E-mail Bill at: reefer@netcom.com

Global Connect, a Williamsburg, Virginia, IP provider, has announced their latest service, the BBS Information Network. This new WEB site provides a place for full-page BBS ads that, when using Mosaic or some other WWW reader, browsers and other people with too much time on their hands can view indexed information about various BBSs, get BBS registration forms or info packets and possibly download your 3 Mb client software. BBS pages can be straight text, graphical and include audio and slow-motion video clips. There is no cost to log on and view the ads. However, for pricing on how much it costs to advertise your BBS on the net or to view ads already in place, set your web browser to: <http://www.gc.net/ads1.html>. Global Connect can be hailed at 497 Queens Creek Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185; (804)229-4484 voice; (804)229-6557 fax; info@gc.net Internet; or <http://www.gc.net> WWW

A commonly asked question is how to monitor serial port throughput. A new answer to that question comes from Glenn Austin who has recently made a beta announcement of Serial Monitor, a serial driver monitoring tool that watches data being sent and received through the serial port. For beta and eventual release info contact Glenn at: glenn_a@efn.org Internet.

Raul Almquist at Winternet has announced that, in association with ShadowMac, a new Macintosh archive site has been established that, in its initial phase, will offer specialized support for Macintosh-based BBS applications, utilities and related files. The site currently contains files for Hermes BBS and MacKenna FidoNet compatible networking mailer files. The site hopes to support Aeolus and Formula 1, in addition to FirstClass, TeleFinder, NovaLink Pro, Pancake, and TeleFinder, and is requesting contributions for all other Mac BBS files as well; publishers and third-party authors should contact the site administrator. All files will be archived in Stuffit or Compact Pro compression formats and uploaded in binary format (no GZiping or BINHEX required). Contact: ftp.wintercom.net ftp site address; pub/shadowmac/uploads uploads; pub/shadowmac/bbs/general general; wltsoin@winternet.com site administration.

A topical mailing list covering Public Address BBS news and issues has been formed. The oft-rumoured BBS program by Colen Garoutte-Carson is of modular, customizable construction sprouting no small amount of third-party action for quoters, blackjack games and what-have-you. Colen currently boasts of a split-screen chat module, and a Usenet module, which enables a user to use one of the modem ports as a "raw" terminal, thus allowing a client to act on a PA site in out-dial mode. Great! Just what a sysop needs - a way for users calling your BBS to call out to another BBS on the other line and on your time. But, if it's connected to the net for TCP/IP telnet connections and you're getting top dollar, it might make sense. Anyways, to keep up on this and more news about when PA might go GUI (or golden), send mail with "subscribe" in the subject header and nothing else to: pa-bbs-request@en.com; then the actual list mailing address will be pa-bbs@en.com. This news from Michael Krause (krause@en.com) proprietor of ExchangeNet, provider of "fine internet services in Cleveland," and we believe him since he lists: ftp, telnet, www, Usenet, gopher and other IP services available to users. Michael Krause, a Public Address pioneer also runs the Exchange BBS, a PA-based host accessible over the super-duper information highway. Via telnet, the host's name is exchange.org and the IP address is 204.89.181.2 (port 23). Dialup is (216)261-9911. More info on ExchangeNet can be had for the asking at info@en.com. In case you can't get thru digitally, Michael's voice line is (216)261-4593.

SoftArc began shipping the 2.6 update to its FirstClass BBS software in November. Chief new feature of this rev is the direct support of the TCP/IP networking protocol available in the free client software, and as the FirstClass TCP/IP option for servers. Once configured, a 2.6 server now accepts TCP/IP logins by 2.6 clients over the Internet. Users and hosts must run Apple's MacTCP extension to make the whole thing work. Windows users must have software configured with a Windows Sockets-compliant TCP stack. Additionally, FirstClass 2.6 adds support for Power Macintosh producing speed improvements enabled by the the PowerPC Modern Memory Manager. Updates to FirstClass 2.6 server and client software are free to registered users; the TCP/IP Protocol Module retails at \$995. A four modem port upgrade boosting simultaneous remote connections over TCP/IP is also now available for \$395. 2.6 clients can be downloaded from eWorld, AOL, most FC bulletin boards, or directly from SoftArc's BBS (905)415-7070.

Meanwhile, Black Labs began shipping its FirstClass Retriever+, an enhanced Newton MessagePad client

that enables those devices to contact FirstClass BBSs for e-mail and conferencing. Retriever+ allows access to conferences now, not just e-mail and displays files and folders and automatically stores retrieved messages temporarily for off-line reading. Search capabilities were also added. Retail is \$99; upgrades from the original version are \$40.

Additionally, Black Labs was to release in January a \$99 Newton Client to allow easy access to CompuServe. CIS Retrieval will be organized as a basic mail package with add-on modules to browse and retrieve information from the various other information areas of CompuServe. To quickly navigate CIS an Exchange mode can be implemented, which allows a connection to be made, all new mail to be retrieved and all unsent messages to be sent and an immediate disconnection. This minimizes connect time and allows messages to be read off-line.

In addition to basic mail, a Forums module will add the ability to browse through CompuServe forums and to send and retrieve messages to and from them. In the future, Black Labs is expected to introduce more CIS modules. The first of these modules is expected to be a stock tracking module that uses the unlimited access to 15 minute delayed quotes in CompuServe to retrieve current information about stocks. The stock tracker module is expected to retail at \$39. Black Labs is kenneled at 3613 Sunshine Canyon, Boulder, CA 80302; (303)938-8580 voice; (303)938-8546 fax.

CANADIAN CLUB?

You would be wrong to think that First-Class from SoftArc is the only Canadian BBS product available for Macintosh. hi-BBS from XBR Communications, located in Montreal has been shipping for almost two years and offers many of the features provided by other advanced Macintosh BBS servers.

First of all, I had always been curious as to the name, hi-BBS. Hello? Well, no, not really: it stands for "human interface." Secondly, XBR is a division of the Telem Communications Group, reportedly a widespread collection of experts in telecom, networking and multi-user systems. Mulling this about - seeing all of the packages, various pricing, modules and options (including ISDN and Hurdler cards for resale) - one might rightly come to the conclusion that XBR is more a value-added reseller

(VAR) specializing in communications. In this scenario, service contract agreements for the customization and installation of a product, like a BBS, is the real profit center, along with the sale of related hardware; while the software in the box, whether for sysops or chiropractors, is the tantalizing carrot designed to open the door. Maybe not. So let's belly-up to the bar and focus on the "off-the-shelf" software hi-BBS provides all of the basics: file transfer, e-mail and full-threaded conferences both supporting multiple enclosures, and live multi-user chat. There is a Mac and Windows GUI interface plus support for ASCII terminal logons. Full support of Apple's Communication Toolbox provides support for a variety of connections including ISDN, X.25, ADSP, multiple modems and AppleTalk network connections.

Hi! The multitasking, Finder-based, Apple Events aware server can be shut-down or launched from anywhere on the network and can be backed-up or modified at anytime without shutting down the background server or disrupting service to current users. It also allows for subscriber billing. QuickTime support provides for online viewing of graphics, while built-in support for popular compression formats allows automatic decompression of files when they arrive at the client's disk.

I'll take mine straight. Pricing starts at **\$88** for one channel (dial-up or network) and five mail boxes; additional mail boxes cost **\$30/5** boxes; Windows client interface starts at **\$50**. Two-Channels starts at **\$369**, up to **\$3,059** for a 256-channel chat monster. Additional packages bundle modules and features ranging from **\$309** to over

\$5,000. Some of the premium "custom" services XBR can perform for you are: custom interfaces, logos and splash screens; online ordering and inventory updating modules, online, full-text retrieval employing Boolean, proximity and wildcard searches; product catalog services' SQL online server; gateways to other hi-BBS servers, QuickMail, MS Mail, OCE, and X.400.

Cheers, for truly these guys are ready to detail-out any BBS. XBR Communications Inc., 5475 Pare Road, Suite 210, Town of Mt. Royal, Quebec, CANADA H4P-1P7;

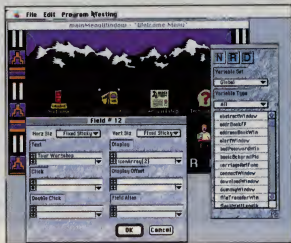
(514)489-1001 voice; (514) 489-4966 fax; (514)489-0445 hi-BBS; XBR AppleLink; ISDN @XBRcom.qc.ca Internet. Now where's the Canadian Mist?

IN YOUR (INTER)FACE

So let's say you run Hermes, TeleFinder or FirstClass and you want to jazz up the look of your text interface. Sure, the guys over at ResNova have RIP, but what other options do you have? Now welcome the Online Workshop (Workshop) from Interface Builders. Basically, Workshop lets you create and edit object-based graphical pages where various elements can be assigned as control functions that are translated into ASCII strings for processing.

What you get is not NAPLPS or RIP-based "graphics" but true graphics using the ASCII standard as the transfer and program interface protocol where data streamed from the host can be transformed into variable "values." A Mac version should be available now, while a Windows version is promised. Unlike NAPLPS' low-res and slow redraw, and RIP's lack of interactivity and limited offline functionality, Workshop, according to its authors, integrates all of the necessary interface functions and control over them. Consequently, a new range of interface possibilities follow: "There is no longer a need for the host to control interaction and a strong multimedia experience is provided, bringing online interaction closer to familiar experiences of the user." TV?

Interface Builders envisions a cross-platform program that is host independent with full, descriptive page capabilities: fully interactive and updatable



Interface Builder's Online Workshop

Dart Star and StartLink are trademarks of Paragon Labs. Other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

with users online, and you don't have to be a programmer to customize the look-and-feel. Interface claims the technology they have developed will be extended in the release of Spike, the company's planned integrated client/server package. Spike, we imagine, is some sort of BBS program, and is supposed to deliver the same ease-of-use with an integrated, packet-based communications protocol (proprietary?), with support for SQL queries as well as other high-level inter-application communications protocols.

So, what we're looking at is yet another bid to provide one standard by which all BBSs, regardless of platform, could deliver easier-to-use GUIs to users in the same way. All based on the ability to transcribe ASCII. Too much, too late? Now, here I thought TCP/IP was supposed to be the new standard. Go figure! In any event, having a tool or utility, like Online Workshop, to freshen up any Mac (or Windows) host text screen is laudable.

For a white paper or developer information contact Interface Builders: 208 Spruce Street; P.O. Box 5987, Ketchum, ID 84430; (208) 726-5232 voice; (208) 726-5350 fax; intbuild@well.sf.ca.us Internet.

ALTERED STATES

So far, there are two commercial ways to provide true IP host services to Macintosh users, short of becoming Netcom, but as we'll see there's a price to pay. These "solutions" are based on running the host on a Unix box with the ability to remotely administer the BBS from a Macintosh. These support both Mac and Windows users with specialized TCP/IP-based client software, not unlike most Mac BBS software.

First, there is the BBN Internet Services route. BBN recently shipped a preconfigured Unix server that can be managed remotely from a Mac. It actually runs a shell program that enables the Mac's administrative input. The BBN bundle lets you create Gopher databases and WWW pages and, supposedly, even act as an FTP site. Downside is we're talking \$9,895 that includes a 60-MHz, 16Mb RAM, Pentium-based server with a half-gig HD and DAT backup.

Then there's the Pipeline, same thing, client software for Mac and Windows that can work with various Internet tools such as newsgroups, WWW, Gopher, Archie, Veronica, WAIS and

FTP. Pipeline runs on a Unix (version 2.0 - currently available for Sun Solaris) box. Interestingly, Pipeline can be had bundled via Intercon which packages the software and IPS pipeline via Intercon's sister organization PSI. Licensed on a per-user per-year basis, prices start at \$7,500 for the hardware/software, plus \$50 per user per year, with quantity discounts. So there's something in it for everyone, especially Pipeline and InterCon, maybe you, too?

But this is an expensive option and who wants to learn Unix? I think I'll go to Juneau, Alaska, and watch from a distance as all of you budding IP service/content providers flop about on the rocks for awhile before you (maybe) spawn and (probably) die (trying). BBN, in Cambridge, MA: (617) 873-8730 voice; (800) 632-7638 toll-free; (617) 873-5620 fax; join-internet@near.net Internet. Pipeline: 150 Broadway, Suite #1710, New York, N.Y. 10038; (212) 572-4985 voice. Intercon Systems: 950 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, VA 22070; (703) 709-5500 voice. ♦

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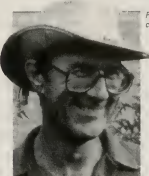
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John C. Dvorak, PC Magazine, Oct 31, 1989

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DELPHI

by Walt Howe

DELPHI GRAPPLES WITH NEWSGROUPS AND COPYRIGHTS

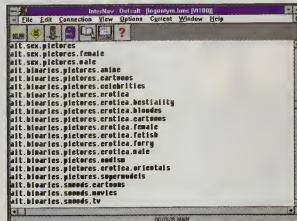
Walt Howe is the Internet Special Manager on DELPHI. He has sysoped for several BBSs including the old Source network, CompuServe, and Delphi. Over the last four years he co-authored with Steve Lambert Internet Basics, Your Online Access to the Global Electronic Superhighway, available in most bookstores. Walt has also written a number of user manuals for various computer companies, including Delphi. Walt can be reached by e-mail as walthowe.delphi.com. A five hour free Delphi membership is available by dialing 800-695-4002 by modem and using the password

A long standing problem of copyright issues in newsgroups has been troubling DELPHI management for some time, and the issue has recently surfaced in discussions within DELPHI forums. Some of the most popular newsgroups are those which carry .gif and .jpg graphics, particularly the sexually oriented ones. Newsgroups are distributed worldwide, and they receive contributions from all over the world, too. Since most of them are completely unregulated, subject only to the flames of fellow users, the contents are chaotic and show little regard for copyright law.

Photographs and drawings are just as subject to copyright restrictions as original texts are. Someone owns every photograph unless the owner releases it to the public domain, or it is old enough for the copyright to expire. This applies whether the pictures are in the form of negatives, printed pictures, displays on screens or in digital form. A scan of a picture is no less subject to copyright restriction than the original picture. And the large majority of pictures posted to newsgroups are scanned pictures posted by someone other than the copyright holder. Technology has made it very, very easy for the average computer user to violate the law without even realizing that there is a problem.

If the liability for copyright violation lay only with the person who uploaded it or those who download and make further use of it, this wouldn't be much of an issue to the carrier. But the law—and the courts that are applying the law—are holding the carriers of copyright violations liable, also without regard to their knowledge of content. Thus the carrier of pictures, whether in a database or newsgroups, whether small BBS or educational institution or large information service, is at risk of copyright violation in carrying pictures of unknown origin.

I'm not a lawyer, and I won't pretend to be able to debate the fine points of copyright law. I'll leave that to Lance Rose in his column. The summary above is accurate as best I understand it, and I know it is troubling the DELPHI lawyers who have looked at the issue. Perhaps the final word has not been settled on liability issues, but the trends in court have been to stricter and stricter interpretations of liability, and there are legislative initiatives to make copyright laws even tougher.



COPYRIGHT INFRINGING NEWSGROUPS?

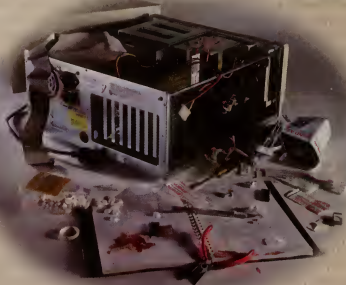
Copyright law should not be confused with pornography or libel issues. They are completely different issues, subject to completely different standards. And it is not an issue of free speech, either. No one has a right to use another's intellectual property in the name of free speech.

In light of these issues, what actions will DELPHI take in regard to protecting themselves? Screening newsgroups is an impossibility. Even if the resources were available to download and look at every picture, there would be no way to establish the source and copyright status of the pictures anyway. On the other hand, the popularity of the newsgroups is such that it is very likely to reduce the number of subscribers, if the offending newsgroups are discontinued on the service. This is an issue that every carrier of newsgroups is going to have to come to grips with sooner or later.

DELPHI added newsgroups to their services nearly two years ago, starting with about 2000 of them. These included some of the alt.binaries newsgroups that are at issue here. The number of newsgroups has grown to well over 6000 now, but DELPHI has been refusing requests to add to the number of offending alt.binaries newsgroups, citing arguments similar to the above.

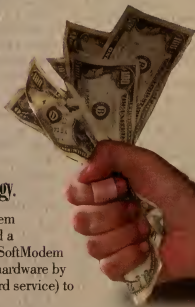
Reactions have been predictably mixed. They have ranged from members quitting to complaining about freedom of speech or First Amendment rights to strong support for intellectual property rights. On the whole, the reaction has been surprisingly favorable.

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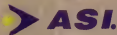
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The current position appears inconsistent. DELPHI is carrying some offending newsgroups, but refusing others. These issues were not clear two years ago; DELPHI added newsgroups as many others had done before them without regard to these issues. But the issues have surfaced now, and I expect to see DELPHI take responsible action, perhaps by the time you read this. I believe DELPHI will drop all the altbinaries newsgroups that typically carry copyrighted pictures—and copyrighted animated sequences, movie clips and sounds, too.

What will the other information services do? — And others who carry newsgroups? Is there a threat to the newsgroups themselves? Or are newsgroups evolving into something else? I welcome your comments addressed to walthowe@delphi.com.

DELPHI'S SOUND BYTES FORUM

DELPHI has adopted a new format for political discussion in its new Sound Bytes Forum. Any message posted in this Forum is limited to eight lines of not more than 80 characters each. The rule by itself decreases the quantity and increases the quality of its messages. No more can a message begin with a lengthy quote! No more can a writer ramble on for line after line, paragraph after paragraph. Limiting every message to eight lines is surprisingly effective at producing concise, well thought out writing that is worth reading and following.

A different topic is designated each week, normally a currently controversial topic that people have lots to say about. Anyone who simply has to say more can find plenty of other political Forums on Delphi to sound off in (see below). But the challenge of limiting your precious words to eight lines really helps clarify thinking and produce good, tight writing. It is just long enough to get across complex ideas, so it does not end up trivializing the topics.

Here is the introduction to SoundBites, reached by typing GO NEWS SOUND:

"Welcome to SoundBites, the most readable opinion forum on DELPHI! SoundBites gives you eight lines to make your point. Make it current. Make it interesting. But make it short. We'll be watching to be sure you stick to eight lines or less. We want your opinion and we want it in a hurry."

FEDERATION: A NEW INTERACTIVE, MULTIPLAYER GAME

As one of a series of new games in Delphi's ELECTROPOLIS Games area, Federation has just been added, joining previous games from Kesmai. Federation is a multiplayer game of interstellar exploration and trade. The game can be played in text only mode, however, software will soon be ready to download that will turn the game into a largely graphical game.

Here is the game's online description:

"Federation is Delphi's adult space fantasy multi-player game. Set within an exciting future scenario of interstellar trade and exploration, the game weaves a complex social and political world between players, both rivals and allies alike. Federation is not just a multi-player game, it's an alternate existence. You can be whoever - or whatever - you want to be.

"As you progress through the game you take on more responsibility, learn new skills. New commands become available to you, and you are given access to areas of the game universe that were previously closed to you.

"You start out by delivering goods around the Galaxy. When you promote to the rank of Trader, you can make a killing on the Galactic trading exchanges, buying and selling your own goods for vast profits. Then you can build a network of factories to produce your own goods. Increase your wealth and status enough, and you can design a planet of your own, that other players can visit and explore. You're given new commands that let you run the economy of your planet, building it up into a profitable world that attracts both traders and tourists. Then the political stages of the game begin, as you form a duchy (the rank or domain of a duke or duchess) and gather planet-owners into your sphere of influence; join the Senate; then try to become Emperor of the Galaxy!

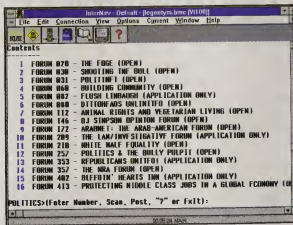
"Federation is not a violent game. Although you can have fun blowing up

non-player characters, and can make groats from being a bounty-hunter, there is only one point at which you - have - to fire a weapon in anger at a computer-generated character, in order to advance in the game. You will gain absolutely nothing from trying to kill players - except the disapproval of the other players.

"Federation is a text-based game. You don't need any special software; you can play it using the computer and communications software you normally use on Delphi. A graphic front-end terminal program called FedTerm, which adds many features to enhance your enjoyment of the game including sound and pictures, will be available shortly."

CUSTOM FORUMS CONTINUE TO GROW

Many members of DELPHI continue to take advantage of the chance to create their own custom forum. Not too surprisingly after the November elections, a lot of the new forums have political themes. The range of interests is quite broad, as the following screen shows.



Political forums abound on Delphi

POLITICS & OPINION

The last four items are brand new and provide a distinct range of interests. Forum 413 is the most fully developed of these. It includes an Internet gopher/navigator menu with timely information, as listed by its moderator Ed Solomon:

FORUM 413 - PROTECTING MIDDLE CLASS JOBS IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY
The middle class in many of the major democracies is being decimated as a

result of corporate re-engineering, downsizing, job relocation to low-wage nations, outsourcing, high taxation and government indifference. Regardless of your views, your opinions and ideas are welcome! The goal of this forum is not just to discuss problems and their causes, but also to propose the solutions needed to halt the decline in our standard of living.

FORUM: The forum is your soapbox to voice your opinion, debate the issues, offer advice and ask questions. Very informal and friendly!

USENET: Direct easy access to related Usenet groups accessible worldwide.

INTERNET GOPHER: Full text of Maastricht, NAFTA and GATT agreements + direct easy access to computer databases around the world. **POLL:** The Middle Class & GATT - Vote and comment...or create your own poll!

CONFERENCE: Live chats with DELPHI members from around the world!

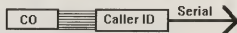
To access this forum type GO CUSTOM 413 from any DELPHI menu prompt! ♦

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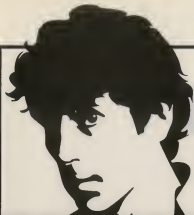
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Norlink Professional	Clark Development, Inc	801-261-1686	801-261-1686	OS/2	Unlim	32	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$195
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RemoteAccess	Hamilton TeleGraphics	619-685-0594	619-685-0594	DOS	255	8	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$149
RoboBoard/FX	The Ryo Company	514-862-1097	514-862-1097	DOS	255	8	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$95
RyBBS	Inside Software	514-733-9644	514-733-9644	DOS	9	4	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$75
Sapphire	Seasoft Co.	216-631-9230	216-631-9230	DOS	Unlim	1	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$45
Searchlight BBS	Seasoft Co.	216-631-9230	216-631-9230	DOS	Unlim	1	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$45
Searchlight Software	Seasoft Co.	216-631-9230	216-631-9230	DOS	Unlim	1	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$199
SoftFire BBS	Buffalo Creek Software	515-225-9552	515-225-9552	MAC	2	2	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$85
Synchronet	Digital Dynamics	714-529-6328	714-529-6328	MAC	255	10	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$99
TBBS	eSoft, Inc	303-699-6872	303-699-6872	DOS	Unlim	64	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$995
TEAMate	MMB Development Corp.	310-318-1322	310-318-1322	UNIX	Unlim	20	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$2000
Telefinder	Spider Island Software	714-669-9230	714-669-9230	MAC	20	20	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$25
The Major BBS	Galacticom, Inc.	305-583-5990	305-583-7846	DOS	256	256	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$25
TinyHost	Bruce Krobusek	716-924-8284	716-924-8284	DOS	255	1	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$75
TriBBS	TriSoft	615-327-3670	615-327-3670	DOS	Unlim	256	OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$300
TSX-BBS	CRB Computer Systems, Inc	615-321-1529	615-321-1529	DOS	Unlim	4	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$75
UnraBBS	CUB Systems, Inc	616-399-8934	616-399-8934	DOS	Unlim	4	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$75
Unreal BBS	Unreal Computer Tech Int, Inc	805-873-2500	805-873-2500	DOS/OS/2	1024	16	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$999
Unreal Mail	Unreal Computer Tech Int, Inc	805-873-2500	805-873-2500	DOS/OS/2	1024	16	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$129
WWIV	WWIV Software Services	210-631-6030	210-631-6030	DOS	999	8	DV	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$80
ZMax XChange	ZMax Computer Solutions, Inc	315-635-1882	315-635-1882	UNIX	Unlim		OS	N	OS	N	O	I	O	Y	Y	\$20



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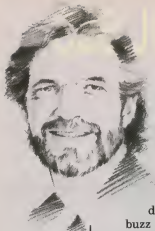
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PRODIGY

by Ric Manning

INTERFACE OVERHAUL WILL MAKE PRODIGY INTERNET WEB BROWSER

The Big Three online services may be piling up new subscribers at a dizzying rate. But everyone knows the real buzz in the online world is the Internet, specifically the World Wide Web. That's where the hip electronic artists, publishers and entrepreneurs are setting up shop. And it's on the Web that companies such as Pizza Hut and Miller Brewing Co. think they will connect with their future consumers.

Prodigy, America Online and CompuServe subscribers probably feel like townies at a frat party when they see ads and news stories that tell them to use their web browser to check somebody's home page.

Web browser? Isn't that a country band? Prodigy subscribers better learn the lingo in a hurry, because they will soon have all of the Web that they can handle.

"We're going to take Internet content and put it through (Prodigy)," Prodigy spokesman Brian Ek said.

Prodigy programmers are furiously tearing apart Prodigy's interface and rewriting using the hypertext mark-up language that allows home pages on the Internet to display headlines, pictures and hot buttons. When they're finished, Prodigy won't look much at all like it does today.

The early version that Prodigy officials showed me at Comdex looked like a Web page with a snappy art deco design. The menu page included navigation buttons across the bottom. And Prodigy's advertisers no longer claimed big chunks of screen real estate. Instead of a big billboard along the bottom of the screen, advertisers had a large button showing a logo and a brief message.

Punch the button and you are transported to the advertiser's main Prodigy screen. Or, Ek said, you might be switched to an advertiser's home page on another system.

Prodigy's Paul Swigart showed how a Mosaic-like front-end can enhance some of Prodigy's existing products. Swigart called up a company stock, specified a date range and within seconds we were looking at the kind of detailed chart that would impress a stockbroker.

The Net-based version was also able to produce color photos and graphics much faster than conventional Prodigy. And the interface contained tools that will

let users clip and save graphics or cut and paste live Web links into e-mail or bulletin board messages.

Prodigy's facelift dovetails with AstraNet, the company's independent operation that will develop information products, including Prodigy content, for the Internet market. But it also appears to be the vehicle that manages Prodigy's transformation into an Internet service.

Internet users who have a Web browser can check out AstraNet at <http://www.astranet.com>. The service offers business, government and sports information for a variety of providers and Prodigy officials say AstraNet will eventually offer one-shot special events, much like a pay-per-view cable service.

Ek said the new interface will be available "some time in early 1995," though he added that "early" may mean June. By the time it's ready for distribution, Ek said Prodigy will have 14.4 Kbps nodes in all major cities. Prodigy wants the interface to be able to run with 2 megs of memory, but users will need at least a 486/33 processor and 10 megs of hard drive space, he said.



Newsweek on Prodigy

NEWSWEEK COMES TO PRODIGY

By some accounts, Newsweek should have been online long ago. Time, its main rival in the newsweekly business, has been on America Online for more than a year. And Newsweek has positioned itself as the news magazine that's hip to new media. It's produced several interactive CD ROMs and it devotes a full page almost every week to news from cyberspace.

Ric Manning writes about computers and technology for *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville, KY. His weekly column on consumer electronics is syndicated through the *Gannett News Service*. Ric reads his e-mail at ricman@iglou.com on the Internet, and USJM92A on Prodigy.

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By Jim Ackerman

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As a result, you can use PCBoard regardless of the size of your board, and regardless of growth or other changes that may take place in the services you offer, the hardware you run or custom add-ons you employ.

Who wouldn't want these 8 essentials the competition considers options you must buy

1 Why should you be charged extra for such an essential function as an Internet Gateway? You shouldn't! So, it's part of the standard package automatically built-in to PCBoard 15.2. Most other BBS manufacturers charge you for it... some charge more than their regular, standard package.

2 Credit Accounting... surely the ultimate essential. PCBoard doesn't make you pay extra for things you must have. With the new Credit Accounting function, you can charge or reward the user for each activity and decide the charges for each: Operate on pre-pay or pay-as-you-go terms; Track in any kind of local currency, you choose, or as credit units. And set your own peak times, including holidays. Again, maximum flexibility!

3 Everyone on your network can now easily use the new, fully integrated Windows E-Mail application, PCBoardMail. No gateway needed because PCBoardMail uses

the PCBoard configuration and data files directly.

4 You won't need a costly front end to add Fido access to your board. It's already part of PCBoard 15.2. Out of the box, your users can do the "Fido thing" right from your PCBoard message bases.

5 Built-in QWK makes you popular with your users. And 15.2's QWK now includes Net Status and File attachments. What a time and money-saver!

6 Now, unleash the power of dBASE III and Database Access, with on-line applications created with the award winning PCBoard Programming Language (PPLC).

7 Your BBS can truly go worldwide with Multi-lingual capabilities. PCBoard 15.2 gives them to you, including support for 2 byte and reverse printing international character set.

8 If you're ready for RIPcrp Graphics, registered PCBoard customers download PCBoard's RIPKit FREE, so your remote callers can choose between ANSI, ASCII and RIP, on your BBS. This out-of-the-box capability presents the caller with a true GUI interface, complete with graphics, icons and mouseable point-and-click menus. Once again, maximum flexibility and adaptability for you and your users.

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Like... you can use the same newsgroup names as the Internet on PCBoard because 15.2 supports conference names up to 60 characters long.

Save amazing amounts of time with our new, Automated, Rules-based File Maintenance Utility. Plus... local logs, 19 FREE PCBoard utilities, and even FREE support for MultiPort hardware, all "standard equipment" on PCBoard version 15.2.

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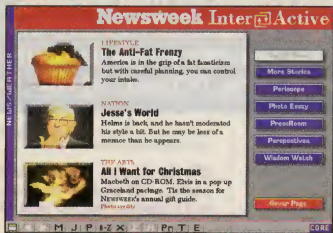
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Newsweek Interactive's Online Debut

But Mary Mosslander, who heads Newsweek's Interactive publishing ventures, said the magazine wanted to wait until it could produce the right online product.

"We wanted it to look like the magazine," she said. "We wanted to use our own fonts. We wanted to be able to display photos that could take you into the stories and have hypertext links to other stories that might not be in the printed version."

Mosslander said Prodigy turned out to be the best fit for Newsweek's goals and Newsweek InterActive made its online debut in mid November. The online magazine looks a lot like its hard copy counterpart. JUMP NEWSWEEK and you see the color cover of the current issue. Many of the stories are illustrated with graphics from the magazine and the Photo Essay puts the week's picture feature online.

Readers can browse online versions of their favorite features and departments, including Cyberscope and My Turn. The Perspectives section gives you one political cartoon and all of the quotes. Check the Wisdom Watch and you can guess who or what is gaining or losing status before you click to make the conventional wisdom's arrows appear.

Newsweek InterActive gives readers a few things they won't see in the magazine. Sound bites, for example. When Newsweek put Rep. Newt Gingrich on its cover, it also included a snippet of audio from a Gingrich interview. Prodigy readers also get their Newsweek first. Mosslander said the electronic version is posted on Sunday, the day before the printed version goes in the mail. And the magazine's news stories will be updated throughout the

week in Postdate, a section that offers relevant stories from The Washington Post. Mosslander said Newsweek will keep back issues online starting with the first electronic issue, but it won't offer a library of older issues.

Newsweek InterActive looks much more like a real magazine than other online publications, but it's not perfect. It still takes too long for graphics to appear at 9600 bps and although the main body type is easy to read, italic type is not.

PRODIGY BUNDLES WITH CD ROM PUBLISHERS

Prodigy has found a new way to get its current access software into the hands of potential subscribers — it's bundling the software with popular CD ROM discs.

The bundling deal involves more than 80 popular CD titles, including titles from Time-Warner Interactive, Moon Valley Software, Intellimedia Sports, Miller Associates, MicroCenter, Interactive Catalog, Pinpoint Publishing and Sirius Publishing's 5-foot 10-pack, which topped recent CD ROM best-seller lists.

Prodigy officials said some CD publishers use the Prodigy connection to supply customer support via e-mail, others use the service to collect warranty registrations and others direct buyers to specific Prodigy bulletin boards and forums where employees are available to answer questions and provide playing tips.

The built-in version of Prodigy appears as an icon when CD ROM buyers install their new software. Clicking on the Prodigy icon automatically installs Prodigy files onto users' hard drives.

CD ROM buyers who use the bundled

software don't have to become Prodigy members in order to connect to the service features used by the CD ROM publishers. But those who do get the first month and ten hours of use for free.

UPGRADE CLEARS INTERNET E-MAIL BOTTLENECK

Sure, Prodigy subscribers have long been able to swap mail with friends on the Internet or on other online services. But the process was never as smooth as it was on CompuServe or America Online.

Prodigy users who wanted to send Net mail had to create it offline using a special mail utility. And if Internet mail turned up in their Prodigy mailbox, they had to download the file, switch out of Prodigy and open the file with a text editor. What a kludge!

But in November, Prodigy made some long-overdue improvements in the way it handles mail from outside its system. Now members can read and write Internet messages while they are connected to the service. Prodigy now treats an Internet address the same way it treats a Prodigy address. Type it in the "TO:" field and off it goes.

The service has also eliminated extra charges for outside mail. Members can send all the Internet messages they want, at no additional cost, as part of the five hours they get online for their basic monthly fee.

Other recent improvements in Prodigy's mail system include:

- Longer messages and subject lines.
- Offline imports. Members can now create messages in a word processor, then import the text when they are online.
- Larger address books. The new book allows 100 addresses — double the previous size — including 50 Prodigy addresses and 50 Internet addresses. Users can also tag addresses with nicknames, making it easier to keep track of friends. ♦

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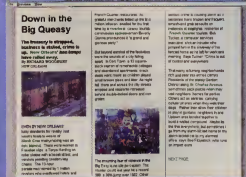
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- Padraig Boyle, PC Magazine

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GENIE by Lenny Bailes

LOOKING INTO GENIE

Lenny Bailes is a PC consultant, writer and teacher living in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is a contributing editor for Microtimes, a California computing magazine, and co-author of Byte's DOS Programmer's Cookbook.

GEnie Management's self-imposed deadline of Dec. 31, 1994 for providing full Internet access to subscribers has come and gone, stimulating a flurry of messages in the GENIE Internet RT. The tenor of the responses varied from: "It's two minutes to midnight, Dec. 31, and I'm going to cancel my account in the morning" to "So a software company missed an announced deadline, what else is new?" But the majority of posters lined up somewhere in the middle. Most of them agreed that it was not GENIE's failure to meet the deadline which was most aggravating, but the complete silence from management for three months following their initial pledge: "The delay, itself, is not the issue, it is the attitude of GENIE management. I feel they ignored us, hoping the problem would go away." Most of the messages also made it clear that their annoyance at GENIE management shouldn't be taken as criticisms of the Internet RT Sysops: "Let's not forget that we have the best group of people around to help us navigate the Internet, once we actually get the link. Without the knowledgeable staff here providing hints and tips, I wouldn't have realized that I can do just about anything on the Internet already through GENIE: FTP, Gopher, Veronica and Archie and even limited WWW access." (This user is referring to the fact that GENIE users can currently leave e-mail for Internet RT sysops, who will perform Gopher searches and FTP transfers for individuals upon request.)

In the first week of January, the sysops were permitted to post an Internet Services Progress Report. This progress report apologized for the delay in implementing Internet access, announced that an alpha test program had been in place for several months and that a stable GENIE Gopher program has already been completed. Sysops or helpers are on hand every evening of the week in the Internet RTC (Page 1405) from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. EST to field questions and help users take advantage of GENIE's existing Internet capabilities.

I spoke with Mark Walsh, President of GENIE Client Services, during the first week of January, attempting to get GENIE management's response to the large number of user queries on "what's

happening" and "when will GENIE's Full Internet Services become available." According to Mr. Walsh, the principal reason the project wasn't finished to meet the initial deadline was a management policy decision. Management decided that full Internet access should wait until it could be fully integrated into GENIE's two graphic front-ends. (GENIE Navigator is currently offered for Windows and Macintosh platforms.)

Walsh believes that the key to GENIE's survival as a competitive online service is to provide graphic-based browsers for new users, giving them the same ease-of-use offered by America Online. Currently, the bulk of GENIE's services are run from a series of Honeywell mainframe computers. These mainframe machines can't conveniently be programmed to support a true graphic front-end. Rather than implement a temporary text-based interface that would provide users with TTY and VT-100 Internet access, GENIE management wants to make the whole range of Internet services (including FTP, Gopher, WAIS and Usenet newsgroups) accessible within the Windows and Macintosh GENIE Navigator packages. Walsh said that a short-term upgrade to the graphic front-ends would appear first, before Internet implementation.



GENIE's online magazine, Livewire, highlights January features

more premature deadlines. According to Walsh, GENIE's plans still do not include any type of SLIP or PPP services. A SLIP or PPP connection is usually required to provide users with graphic access to the World Wide Web or simultaneous use of other Internet tools.

GENIE is not the only communication service that's been feeling pressure at the corporate level to "become a competitive big-league player." The Well, a service started by futurist and merry prankster

The short-term upgrade will allow Internet access and be followed, later in the year by completely rewritten Windows and Macintosh front ends. For GENIE to offer icon-based point-and-click access to GENIE Roundtables, Usenet newsgroups and other Internet utilities, the bulk of GENIE must be migrated from the Honeywell computers to more compatible Unix machines. All of this will come to pass sometime during 1995, but GENIE management wants to avoid announcing any

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Stewart Brand, has also fallen under the gaze of would-be "captains of industry" — eager men who seek to transform their telecommunication assets into multimillion dollar enterprises. That GENIE and the Well have served as vehicles to create extended families and meaningful personal communication for their respective memberships seems less important, in the schemes of the '90s, than the owners' apprehension of the exploding communication market. The accepted canon seems to be: to avoid being swallowed by the giants (America Online, CompuServe, Microsoft Network, etc.), smaller commercial networks should be force-fed until they become bloated giants, themselves. Mindful of the fate that befell alternative FM-Radio, I have strong misgivings about the mindset that encourages this process.

On the Well, a series of users united in protest of management's grandiose plans to bottle their postings for mass-market distribution. Ironically, influenced by clauses in Prodigy's user agreement, management also sought to make their users indemnify the Well against legal damages. A clause quietly inserted into the Well user-agreement would make individual users liable for the Well's attorney fees in the event of corporate lawsuits. Eventually, management abandoned this idea, after a series of anguished cries from writers and artists who make the Well their virtual home. What appears to be similar in the situations facing GENIE and the Well is the gulf between upper management and the ordinary users. The people in charge of making executive decisions are no longer users of the product. They believe they know how to make a communications service successful, but they, themselves, are not "electronic citizens."

The thing that I (as one electronic citizen) appreciate most about the online community is the opportunity it provides to seek opinions and ask questions. Sometimes, I confess, I am baffled by the events that take place in the big world out there. I couldn't believe my eyes, several days ago, reading about the Supreme Court's refusal to grant a stay of execution to a convict whose prosecutor claimed he was innocent of murder.

The man pled guilty to first degree murder, apparently, to protect his sister. Later, he recanted, when the state of Texas put his sister on trial for the same crime. The prosecutor who handled both cases stated his belief that "the man condemned to die today was outside of the house when the

crime was committed — an accessory who didn't know his sister had a gun." A 1983 Supreme Court ruling on a similar case affirms that the Eighth Amendment proscribes cruel and unusual punishment, banning the execution of someone who, "although a participant in a crime that led to murder, did not actually kill or intend for a killing to take place." But, apparently, the Supreme Court of the '90s denied the plea of Jesse Dewayne Jacobs because there were flaws in his lawyer's brief. L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican daily newspaper, likened the Supreme Court to Pontius Pilate for this decision: "The court preferred the way of Pilate by just washing its hands of the matter."

The governor of Texas, Ann Richards, could not grant a stay, because in Texas, this requires the State Board of Pardons and Paroles to convene and give its approval. This Texas agency hasn't commuted a death sentence in more than ten years, and consistently refuses to assemble and hold hearings proximate to the execution of such sentences according to several lawyers in response to a post on the Well news conference.

It seems to me that cases like these are the reason that America's founding fathers invented the Supreme Court in the first place. (Justices Ginsberg, Breyer and Stevens dissented from the decision to deny a stay of execution with "grave reservations about the majority decision." If you agree with the dissenting justices, you may want to lend your support or send a donation to: Death Penalty Information Center, 1606 20th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036)

GENIE RT NEWS

Meanwhile, back at GENIE's RTs, business as usual includes some useful and interesting facets. GENIE's new Readers' RT (page 1590) is dedicated to "all those who cherish, enjoy and respect the written word." The Readers' RT categories include areas devoted to best sellers, pop fiction, genre fiction, comics,

children's literature, periodicals, poetry, literary criticism and a variety of nonfiction categories on history, biography, computers and technical subjects. There is also an "Author of the Month" category, focusing each month on the works of a specific individual. This month the author is Daniel Pinkwater, a children's writer, who will also participate in a Readers' RT real time conference.

The Readers' RT file library already includes the text of classics like BEO-WULF, DON QUIXOTE, GULLIVER'S TRAVELS, ROMEO AND JULIET and WAR AND PEACE. Future plans are to include more works from Aristotle, Voltaire, Shakespeare, Dickens, Poe and donated online works from contemporary authors. The Readers' RT has a kaffee-klatch RTC every Friday evening, in addition to scheduled events with guest authors.

The Tax Bulletin Board (Page 1040, what else?) holds real time financial discussions every Wednesday night, and offers AMTAX94.ZIP (a shareware tax program) in their file library. You can also download the Adobe Acrobat reader and a series of tax tables and forms in Acrobat PDF format. The Macintosh RT Software library (Page 511) now features NCSA's Mosaic Web browser (File 33254, MOSAIC.SIT). NCSA Mosaic on the Mac requires System 7.5's built-in TCP/IP software or a third-party equivalent. The OS/2 RT library (Page 1400) now features HTMLWIZ.ZIP, an OS/2 utility for creating/editing Web pages in the Hypertext Markup Language.

The New Age (Page 1122) and Music (Page 135) RTs cosponsor a real time conference this month on composing

4



For more on Texas, see Science Source Worldwide 1994 issue for an article on the state.

The Milky Way's New Neighbor

A nearby "spiral galaxy" has been discovered by astronomers using telescopes in Hawaii. Located 100,000 light years away, it is the closest galaxy to our own. It is named NGC 4676, also known as the "Bode's Galaxy". It is a spiral galaxy, like our own, but it is much smaller. It is about 10,000 light years across. It is located in the constellation of Coma Berenices. It is named after the astronomer John Bode, who discovered it in 1780.

For a link, download the file from the Space & Science Source World Library.

4684 800x600x16.BMP Download 1, then save to your galaxy

World's Largest Scale Model of the Solar System

It begins in Forto, Italy, at the L'Aquila Museum in a small town. It is 100 meters long. It is the longest model of the solar system in the world. It is made of wood and metal. It is a scale model of the solar system. It is located in the town of Forto, Italy. It is named after the astronomer John Bode, who discovered it in 1780.

Science Fare

Inside This Issue

- 1 Roundtable Amateur Astronomer's Discovery
- 2 November Science News
- 3 What's Up for December
- 6 Return to the Moon CD-ROM Review
- 8 A Review of Microsoft's Space Simulator
- 12 A Man on the Moon - A Book Review
- 13 3D Body Adventure CD-ROM Review

New Galaxy, Dwingelo-1, found in the Space and Science RT

and recording New Age music. The New Age file library continues to accumulate interesting Tarot card samples from a variety of different authors and will conduct a conference in January on Tarot card design. Science Fare, the online magazine published by the Space and Science RT (Page 460), brings the news this month that a 110th trans-Uranium element has been discovered. The newsletter also includes a radio-telescope photograph of Dwingelo-1, a freshly-discovered neighbor galaxy to the Milky Way.

The USA East RT (Page 1040) will feature a conference this month, focusing on Native American Issues. Category 11 of USA East is specifically devoted to this theme. You can also download the Internet Native American Newsletter, Wotang Ichke, from the East file library. Most issues of this newsletter include thought-provoking essays and colorful poetry, such as the following:

A HAWAIIAN BOOK OF DAYS, week of January 8-14

IANUALI
(January)
(Kaelo)

Day 8: The spirit of the land guides me in every choice that I must make.

Day 9: This land is born of fire and ocean and wind. In my mind is the fire of knowledge; in my blood run the currents of the ocean; in the wind do I hear the song of my spirit.

Day 10: The rumble of the volcano is like the beating of a great heart.

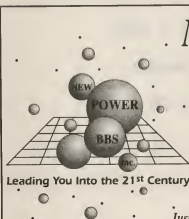
Day 11: The gift of knowledge is never diminished.

Day 12: In the neverending cycles of the land is my spirit renewed.

Day 13: This is the place where rainbows are born.

Day 14: The land was created in the joining of fire and water.

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Me ke aloha i ka nani,...
Moe'uhanekuanuenu
(With love and beauty, ... Rainbow Dream)



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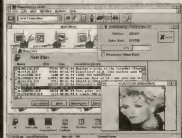
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functions including full text indexing and user access controls and provides a commercial alternative for Gopher and World Wide Web servers;

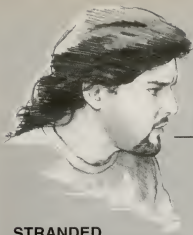
*take a look at **TEAMate**.*

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DIRECT DIAL

by Brian Gallagher

STRANDED IN GUANTANAMO

There is a fledgling sysop who is missing home very much. Located on the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba, Frank Griffin, Petty Officer 3rd class, an electronics technician has been on the island since September of 1991, and though he likes the base, its history and environment, there are still many comforts the states have to offer that he misses daily: Taco Bell, (there is only a McDonalds on the base), going to a movie that is actually indoors, driving more than five miles in a day or going to a shopping mall. But, what he misses most is a good reliable telephone line.

The one line his Searchlight BBS, Ye Ole' Ponder Patch, 011-5399-3693, runs on today is hooked to an underwater cable running to Florida, which is just barely of high enough quality for voice communications and often deplorable for data transmission. Because of this, and because there aren't any shopping malls to be browsed, getting the latest software available is not a reality in any sense of the word, prompting him to say, "We need software down here really bad."

For instance, the popular slash and gash, shoot 'em up id software game "DOOM" arrived on the island six months ago and that was only because new transfer brought it with him, which is the way most of the software gets to be on the Ponder Patch. To alleviate his line problems, Griffin is negotiating with the proper base authorities to have the line transferred to a satellite link and will hopefully have that end achieved sometime at the beginning of this year.

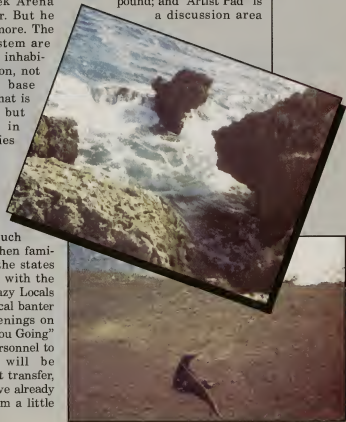


Sysop Frank Griffin on Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba with sites and inhabitants of the island

For now, the Ponder Patch, opened in November of 1993, and the only BBS on the base, does have 15 online games with Mek Arena being the most popular. But he would like more - lots more. The conferences on the system are another favorite of base inhabitants and for good reason, not only do they keep base personnel apprised of what is going on around them, but they help users keep in touch with their families back home.

Griffin set up the "NEO Nightmares" conference in September of last year as a place for base personnel to keep in touch with their loved ones when families were sent back to the states because of the situation with the Cuban refugees. The "Lazy Locals Lounge" is a place for local banter about events and happenings on the island; "Where Are You Going" is a place for military personnel to discuss where they will be stationed after their next transfer, and where those who have already been there can give them a little

insight as to what to expect; a "Pets" area works on finding homes for animals in the base pound; and "Artist Pad" is a discussion area



- STRANDED IN GUANTANAMO
- MODELS BY MODEM
- SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC ACCESS
- DESERT BOARDS



Welcoming screen of Ye Ole' Ponder Patch BBS in Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba

where those with a creative bend discuss different art styles on the island, and where would-be poets post their latest efforts for all to read.

Griffin's favorite area is Sea Stories, where one-upmanship is a big factor in the stories base personnel post of their personal experiences while in the services. He calls it, "a place for something you can't believe that happened to you in the Navy," and "a lot of fun." There is also a "Jokes and Giggles" area and a place for Software and Hardware support.

The system runs out of his home on the base and is set up on 486/25 with 16 MB RAM, a 14.4 Kbps modem and a CD ROM giving him 1,000 files online at any time, and a total of around 5,000 files when he switches the shareware CD for another (he has four).

Griffin is seventh generation career military (something he is very proud of) and his wife, Rebecca, is also in the Navy. Calling BBSs for 12 years, he first got hooked playing Trade Wars on a Miami system, and today BBSs and this sailor are inseparable. "It's (BBSs) my hobby...it's part of who I am," he said. Working on getting his bachelor's

degree in electrical engineering, his duties on the base center around nursing sick PCs back to health as well as teaching computer classes for the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels.

With a little luck and a lot of determination, Griffin hopes to be able to offer a solid connection to the states soon (via a satellite link) and is hoping this will help to bring his system the latest files he wants so badly, not to mention being able to communicate with the outside world and perhaps hook up to a network or two - pending base approval of course.

We called and connected to this system without too much difficulty. However, when we tried to download a file we lost the connection.

For those wishing to help this struggling sysop in his quest for files, if you are not able to connect to his system - a disk in the mail would be most welcome.

Ye Ole' Ponder Patch; Frank Griffin, Petty Officer 3rd Class, PSC 1005 Box 13 Bin 301, FPO AE 09593-0113; 011-5399-3693 BBS; 011-5399-2937 voice.

MODELS BY MODEM

In the past when an advertising executive needed a model for a client the process was a lengthy one. First they needed to contact a local agency and then set up an appointment for an agency representative to come over and see them, or they would have to go to their offices and browse through piles of composition cards, (photographic compilations of photos of individual models), until they found the face, body or look they wanted. Thanks to technology and Joe Leone this is no longer necessary. So long as the advertising agency has a modem and a modicum of knowledge, the quest for the look they are in need of will take only minutes.

Models On-Line, (203)529-2703 running Mustang's Wildcat! v.4.01 with Durand Communications DC Genesys photographic online database, offers Connecticut advertisers a quick and easy way to get the look they want with a minimal amount of effort. The board first opened in December of 1994 and already has a database of 60 models to peruse from two different agencies - Newstar Inc., Model Services (Leone's agency) and Glamour National Modeling Agency - another local firm. If, however, a model, or would-be model, is not affiliated with an agency, the system is also



Main Menu of Newstar Inc.'s, Model Services Models On-Line, in Wethersfield, Connecticut

open to them for a fee of \$25 per year giving them up to five pictures on the system along with full contact information and detailed information regarding their height, weight, hair and eye color and measurements.

The system offers search capabilities, if say a client is in need of a child-female model with blonde hair they will be accommodated. Searching can also be done by height, and a variety of measurements but, there is no guarantee that a six



Nancy Moranion with some of her online friends from the spa!

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC ACCESS

A year ago, Nancy Moranion moved from her home in Hawaii to Springfield, Massachusetts to take care of and give support to her mother who had fallen and fractured a hip. A short six months later it was Moranion who was in need of support, however, when she was diagnosed with aplastic anemia, a form of cancer.

Fortunately for her, support was only a keystroke away because shortly after moving to Springfield a man who fixed her computer after problems with the power supply also hooked her up with the 32 line spa! (Springfield Public Access BBS!), (413)536-4365, running TBBS software. The friends she has made on the board have turned out to be a bright spot in her life during these ominous and foreboding times. Spending an average of three hours everyday on the system, it is where she finds support for her illness and where she finds help when dealing with the day to day struggles of life, now more difficult than ever.

With the cancer and the resulting treatments, transfusions and tests, besides the comfort she receives from her many new friends, she has also found a dedicated crew of users who will stop at nothing to help one in need. When she needed to winterize her home, (the drafts around the windows were considerable), she asked for and got help from several users who installed a "shrink-wrap" type plastic film over her windows keeping the cold out, the warmth in, and hopefully keeping her healthy as the bitter Massachusetts winter sets in.

But that isn't all, another online friend fixed her ceiling when it became water stained after she experienced her first-ever case of ice-damming on the roof. Other friends came out to see her in Rhode Island where she was undergoing tests at a bone marrow clinic just to see how she was doing and if they could do anything for her, and still another friend offered to pay her mortgage should she be unable to do so (an offer which she has so far avoided).

This sort of camaraderie between users is common place on the spa! and sysop Matthew de Jongh and co-sysop/fiancee' Linda McCarthy can tell you why. The pair designed the system to be like a neighborhood bar - a local hangout, where friends talk about the day, politics or a sunset as naturally as if they were right there next to them tossing back a cold one. Creating this homey feel on the system de Jongh attributes largely to listening to the 1992 ONE BBSCON tapes of "The Phil and Jack Show" over and over until they were literally inaudible. "I just did everything they said on the tapes and listened to them everyday," he said.

Of course, McCarthy's MBA in marketing doesn't hurt either, or the local radio and television station, which have an area on the board in exchange for advertising the system, or the local newspaper and a magazine that do the same. A newcomer to their board, and perhaps a bellwether of trends to come in the online world, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles is on the

system making it considerably easier to get answers to your vehicle questions as they really do reply to messages in a timely fashion. Taking the community view of things one step further, the spa! also has an area dedicated to the homeless, "The Open Pantry."

De Jongh, a graphic artist by trade, first worked with BBSs late in 1987, when working for a printing company. He needed to get files electronically from clients for printing and decided to go with the same software package of one of their customers - TBBS. Getting his introduction to the online world in this way, de Jongh left the printing company in January of 1989 to pursue a freelance career, setting up



Linda McCarthy and Matthew de Jongh with their Old English Sheepdog, Limerick

his own BBS the next month, not for work, but just for a hobby and to give locals a friendly place to call. At the time, he said, the BBSs in the area seemed to be very cliquish, in that no one would talk to a person if they didn't know somebody, and women were being harassed left and right - hence the name and focus of the system.

The system grew to six lines in just two months and has been on a steady upward climb ever since. Today the spa! has over 5,000 users, takes about 1,000 calls every day and has monthly get togethers attended by no less than 50 users every time. There isn't really a particular area that is more popular than any other on this well-rounded general system; caller activities are spread evenly between files, games, mail and chat.

Role-playing games garner the biggest crowd-out of online gamers, with "Illusions" garnering the largest following by far. There are over 250,000 files here, culled largely from five, six-disc Pioneer CD ROM changers, and 85 MB of information (including 2,500 Usenet newsgroups) received daily from their PageSat satellite link. In addition, there are over 20 conferences unique to the system with topics including politics, new users and a particularly strong genealogy area, helped along by a 68-year-old grandmother.

The system runs on a Pentium 90, a Novell 312 file server with 32 MB RAM, a machine for the five disc changers and another supervising the satellite link. On the way to this popular home town system is eSoft's IPAD, (the spa! is a beta test site for TBBS), providing full Internet access for callers. Already, there are 16 lines (not including the 32 lines for the system) waiting to support SLIP accounts once the Internet connection is finally made - expected to before the end of January.

For those looking to build the perfect neighborhood system, take a look at what the spa! has done for the Springfield community. In an increasingly transient and cold-hearted "me" society, it is good to hear Moranon say, "I'm very proud of my friends on the spa!" And so you should be.

Subscriptions are \$10 for a trial membership which includes two hours per day online time for a month which can be applied to any full yearly membership anytime during the trial period. Yearly memberships are \$45 for

one hour per day, \$75 for two hours per day and \$250 for unlimited time - all memberships include full access.

The spa!, attn: Matthew de Jongh and Linda McCarthy, P.O.Box 2661, Springfield, MA 01101-2661; (413) 536-4365 BBS; (413) 539-9818 voice; sysop@the-spa.com Internet e-mail; the-spa.com telnet.

DESERT BOARDS

BBSouthwest is a one-line Searchlight system running in the often searing desert of Tempe, Arizona. As isolated as this board is from any sizable urban area, it is also isolated from the Internet and all other smaller networks. Despite this Bedouin isolation, the board remains a well-spring of connectivity in this otherwise desolate area, by keeping the Southwestern BBS list, with 437 telephone numbers.

The list, updated continuously, and first compiled in October of 1991, is like nothing we have seen before. It is actually a Windows program written in Visual Basic by sysop and list keeper Michael Masters with a fully searchable point and click GUI interface. With the backdrop of Utah's masterful arches, the buttons down the side of the program read: "What's New," "Advertisements," "Phoenix List," "BBS Search," "Tucson List," "Clear Screen," "Vendors," "Find Vendor," "?" and "Exit."

Under What's New is the sysops compilation of trends he sees in the online world written in a very entertaining manner with no small amount of editorial opinion. For instance, "RIP forever, ANSI never...well maybe HTML." It is no wonder Masters holds this view since he describes the main thrust of his board as RIP graphics, and there are all sorts of things flying around the screens on this system through most every menu you come to. He is also a big fan of the SearchLight software he runs on the system.

"All in all my experience with Searchlight has been like, 'A long lost son coming home to his family,'" he said. Searchlight, he continues, is small enough that the company is still like a family, adding that he can get hold of the company's president, Frank LaRosa, anytime he needs to. Coupled with local RIP, SearchLight's policy of making their source code available to their users, and a slew of eager to please third party developers, there is little doubt this sysop will ever stray from the SearchLight fold.

The Advertisements button has eight very graphical BBS promotions under it, and the promotions have only two simple rules, "no charge to you...no bitching at us" adding that he is glad to do it. But, he does like those graphical advertisements, encouraging sysops to send GIF, PCX JPG and BMP images along with the name and number of their board, however, he reserves the right to censor images submitted. And the boards advertised here are not



Visual Basic Windows program offers Southwestern BBS list and product support list in searchable GUI interface



Advertisement for BBSouthWest found on the Southwestern BBS list

restricted to any specific area - they can come from anywhere.

The Phoenix and Tucson list combined total 437 BBSs to call. If you know the name of the board you are looking for the BBS Search button is a great help. Where the search capabilities really come in handy though, is when looking for a company on the Vendor list; with 384 companies to choose from, callers are likely to find the right contact information for whichever piece of hardware or software on their system that needs fixing.

The Phoenix list is dominated by 14.4 Kbps modems while the Tucson list has a surprising preponderance of tortoise, 2400 and 1200 baud modems - a full 68 percent between the two of them. Not so however, for BBSouthwest, which supports 14.4 Kbps transmissions with a Practical Peripherals modem. And that is something to note, if you are not calling in with at least a 14.4 Kbps modem you will be disconnected - a strange quirk I thought, but absolutely true.

First online in December of 1988, running RBBS shareware software, the system ran Mustang's Wildcat! until just recently switching to the Search-Light platform. Set up on a custom built 486/33 with 6.5 gigabytes of hard drive space and two CD ROMs, the board is mostly for files having but little message traffic in its six conferences: BBS Advertisements, Bulletin Conference, Complaint, General Bull,

RIP and OS/2 - the most popular he said, with most of the talk here being about difficulties with installation.

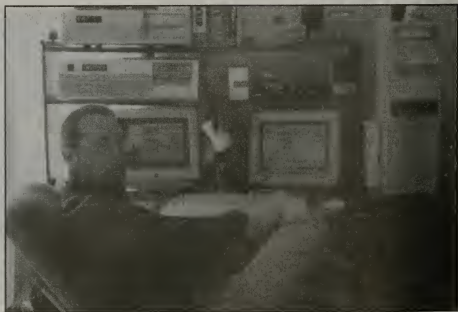
Files are the big draw for his 430 "very active" users. He has over 8,000 files centered largely around RIP graphics and CAD (Computer Aided Design) programs, as well as the standard Windows utilities and some sound files.

Moving from Chicago where he worked re-wrapping wire around electrical motors, Masters moved back to his

home state of Arizona in 1979. Since the largest electrical motors in Tempe (where he lives with his wife, "Alex," and three children: Amanda, 19, Lauren, 16, and Ethan, 10) were on pool pumps - he attended a technical college to learn a valuable skill, which turned out to be CAD programming. In 1979 he got his first job working with CAD programs with the Department of Energy; and his foray into the online world occurred with an XT computer, and a 300 baud modem in 1985.

Today, he works for a public utilities company in the area as a computer support analyst and has done so for the last 10 years. Enjoying programming in C and Pascal, Masters likens programming to childbirth. "When you do write a program it's like hatching a baby," he said, "and when people use it and enjoy it the satisfaction is there." A "baby" he has hatched that all are sure to enjoy is his Southwest BBS list, (log in as GUEST to obtain it), - a big download, taking just over 10 minutes to complete, fortunately however, the program is also available via ftp from wuarhive.wustl.edu courtesy of Washington University.

Access to the system is free and there are no upload/download ratios. BBS Southwest, attn: Michael Masters, P.O.Box 25078, Tempe, Arizona 85285; (602)820-8761 BBS. ♦



BBSouthwest sysop, Michael Masters, at home in Tempe, Arizona

AREA CODE 602

487 SOUTHWESTERN BBSs

NAME	NUMBER	SPEED	NAME	NUMBER	SPEED
4th Wave / AMUG board 2	947-0587		BBSouthWest	820-7861	28.8
ABBA's Keep	233-8661	14.4	Bedrock	992-3055	14.4
Abbey of Chao's	225-9708	14.4	Berlin Connection, The	834-4962	14.4
Abolons of Castle V	938-5999	14.4	Beyond Bob	964-2399	14.4
Abstract Data Tech.	840-5611	9600	Bible Foundation(RIP'd)	789-7040	14.4
Ace Service Group	838-4012	14.4	Bistro, The	872-1419	14.4
ACM/IEEE Phx. Chapter	970-0474	14.4	Bit Bucket, The	780-2213	14.4
ADTBBS	840-5611	9600	Black Stallion	649-0310	14.4
After Hours	944-2923	14.4	Blue's Place	833-8140	2400
Alcatraz Island	569-1632	28.8	Blue Room	938-4277	14.4
A.L.I.C.E. BBS	934-8062	14.4	Boardwalk Hotel	955-9338	14.4
All Nighter	516-1283	14.4	Boardwalk Hotel (members line)	955-5308	14.4
All Nine Cafe	938-6866	14.4	Bob's Place Node 1	497-2173	2400
Alpha Complex	995-8209	14.4	Bob's Place Node 2	545-8745	14.4
Amazing Connection	843-6574	14.4	Bob's Westside, Node 1	247-0405	2400
AMC Net	814-0123	9600	Bob's Westside Node 2	247-8803	14.4
Am. Cybernetics Multi-Edit	968-1082	14.4	B.O.N.E., The (RIP'd)	242-8425	14.4
American Hydrogen As.	894-8403	14.4	Broadcaster's BBS, The	872-9148	9600
American Traveler's	978-6505	19.2	Bulldhead BBS	401-5318	14.4
Amiga Bazaar	964-2640	16.8	Cactus City Drayway	678-0214	14.4
Amiga Talk	943-0159	14.4	Cactus Computer	553-8337	9600
AMUG Preferred 2	553-0721	14.4	CAD Connection(RIP'd)	835-0274	14.4
ASU MRF	965-6781	2400	Candy's Sweet Shop	272-9403	9600
Ace Service Group	838-4012		Captain's Quarters BBS	412-2023	14.4
AmAZ-ing Connection	843-6574	14.4	Carl Hayden H.S.	271-2458	14.4
Amiga Bazaar BBS, The	964-2640	14.4	Carl Hayden H.S.	271-2492	14.4
Amiga City, node 1	788-7144		Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4537	14.4
Amiga City, node 2	443-1977		Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4538	14.4
AMUG I	553-0749	9600	Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4539	14.4
AMUG II/4th Wave	947-0587	14.4	Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4540	14.4
Amy Advisor	582-5174	14.4	Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4541	14.4
Anarchy Connection	234-4150	9600	Carl Hayden H.S.	440-4542	14.4
Android's Revenge	786-3249	2400	Casa Rosa	266-4277	14.4
Anime Archive	863-6599	14.4	Chairman Paul's Journal	831-0464	14.4
Anie Up/Express It	930-8707	14.4	Chandler C Connection BBS	759-7789	2400
APEX	860-2947	14.4	Chandler Prog Connection 1	759-7789	9600
Apollo 8.0	246-1432		Chandler Prog Connection 2	759-6289	14.4
Archer-80	843-1704	9600	Chandler Prog Connection 3	759-6290	9600
Arishet Keep	265-5254	9600	Chandler Prog Connection 4	759-8291	28.8
Arizona Chattie Ranch	843-0998	14.4	Cheese Whiz BBS	272-0793	14.4
Anzonia MicroDesigns	548-0055	2400	Circle of Fellowship	942-8921	14.4
Arizona Network	947-9623	14.4	Class of 68s	518-9788	14.4
Arizona Online(RIP'd)	912-0225	14.4	Classic Model Image BBS	840-4114	14.4
Arizona Open Connection	386-7777	14.4	Clay's Asylum(RIP'd)	935-1469	14.4
ASU Library CARL Node1	841-2174	2400	Coco Bug	996-8628	2400
ASU Library CARL Node2	965-7001		Coconut Telegraph	892-5580	14.4
ASU Library CARL Node3	965-7002		Coffee Club, The(RIP'd)	945-0363	14.4
ASU Library CARL Node4	965-7003		Commo-Amigos	245-9492	14.4
ASU Library CARL Node5	965-7004		Comp. Justice's Natl Crime	846-4470	14.4
Atlantic Data	965-7005		Compton's Swap Meet(RIP'd)	849-2327	14.4
Automate	995-1879	19.2	CompuServe	955-1464	2400
Automation Bridge/APPs	906-0424	14.4	CompuServer	955-7572	1200
Automotive Network	947-7678	9600	Computer Connection	931-1750	14.4
Backtrails BBS	396-6652	9600	Computer HandyMan	548-9706	14.4
Bart Stop Node 1	972-6450	14.4	Computer Ticket	846-4470	
Bart Stop Node 2	833-0532	14.4	Computer Tickle Line	899-8604	2400
Bart Stop Node 3	833-7871	14.4	Conceptual CAD Design(RIP'd)	Now BBSSouthWest	
Bart Stop Node 4	833-8013	9600	Construction Net #1	894-8762	14.4
Bart Stop Node 5	833-8085	14.4	Continuum Node 1	866-3302	14.4
Bart Board	833-8118	14.4	Continuum Node 2	863-7013	9600
Bates Motel	789-0091	14.4	Cop Shop	581-6918	14.4
Battlstar Galactica	943-3327	28.8	CornerStone	873-1404	14.4
Baud-E-Board	269-1209	2400	Courts of Chaos, The	873-2755	14.4
BBS At The End of the Universe, The	814-9330	14.4	Cracked BBS	834-9347	14.4
	952-1870	14.4	Crazy BBS	948-6963	14.4



NAME	NUMBER	SPEED	NAME	NUMBER	SPEED
Crossroads	482-8577	14.4	Heisnore's Dungeon	849-4903	14.4
Crystal World	644-1755	14.4	Highlander's Domain	786-9741	2400
Cutting Edge	964-5796	14.4	High Seas, The	921-1948	1200
Cyberopia	814-8100	14.4	Hogs Den	936-5262	14.4
CyberQuest	649-5394	14.4	Hoge Den	936-9910	28.8
Cyber World Node 1	435-6514	14.4	Hot Bauds DataSEX	938-9690	14.4
Cyber World Node 2	930-1476	14.4	HOTLINE, The	853-9160	14.4
CyberJustice/US Nat'l Crime	878-5181	14.4	Hot Shots/Frog Farm	279-1055	14.4
Dad's BBS	786-0219	14.4	Huff & Puff	516-0639	14.4
Dark Technologies	491-6207	14.4	I&S Engineering I	863-5088	9600
Dark Tower	246-8580	2400	I&S Engineering II	863-5093	9600
Data Comm	943-9278	14.4	IBM PC SIG/Mastercom	263-8302	1200
Data Terminal Ready	939-4753	14.4	Ilusion	392-1152	14.4
Dawg Pound	848-3704	9600	Immortal BBS	814-8026	9600
Daydreamer's Paradise	843-9533	9600	Improv	991-4849	14.4
Dead Planet	873-3056	14.4	Infidim #1	952-1870	14.4
Defer's	936-3666	14.4	InfoBase	872-1943	19.2
DemoSoft BBS(RIP'd)	922-0000	14.4	Info Zone	937-7780	14.4
Desert, The(RIP'd)	942-1584	14.4	Internet Direct	274-9600	14.4
Desert Connection Node1	827-9465	14.4	Intimidator	548-3306	14.4
Desert Connection Node2	835-0799	14.4	InTrec Software	992-9769	19.2
Desert Connection Node3	835-2269	14.4	Iron Bugle	987-0135	14.4
Desert Mountain	839-3966	14.4	JCCS, Node 1	582-3643	14.4
Desert Springs	953-2351	2400	JCCS, Node 2	582-4309	2400
idewhull	922-5720	28.8	Jester's Court	930-1301	14.4
Devil's Gate	256-0556	14.4	Jim's Place	497-5757	14.4
Devil's Island	451-3315	14.4	Jon's Hot Rod	933-1536	9600
Diamond Express	931-1229	14.4	Just For Fun(RIP'd)	254-0999	14.4
Dilithium Genesis	831-7372	14.4	Kelly's BBS	878-7925	14.4
Dragon's Breath	483-7513	14.4	Keyboard, The	922-5905	14.4
Dragon's Breath	483-0141	14.4	Keyboard Systems	846-2940	14.4
Dragon's Fire	547-0901	14.4	Kitty's Sandbox	829-7522	9600
Dragonfall's Empire	488-1074	14.4	Knave's Korner	581-0412	14.4
Drawing Board	968-7288	14.4	Land of Nomad	936-3076	14.4
DreamLand	252-5788	14.4	A.W. Lab	266-2091	14.4
Duplicate Bridge/Clogging	982-5060	2400	Land of Nomad	846-4420	14.4
Dustin's Computer Pub	807-3975	9600	Last Chance Hideaway	973-8507	14.4
East Valley Portal	441-8414	14.4	Late Night	979-1014	14.4
Eclatasy Island	935-5637	14.4	Libertarian Voice BBS, The	898-1784	14.4/32
Ed's Place	846-7724	14.4	Light Post	966-8629	14.4
Ed's Place II	846-0732	14.4	LightSpeed	277-4279	14.4
Edge Secret Society	482-8193	14.4	LimeLight BBS(The Mars Hotel)	788-3898	2400
Electrified BBS	942-9405	14.4	Living Dead	479-7567	14.4
Electronic Jungle	438-0525	14.4	Mach's Place	241-0256	19.2
Electronic Mat. & Comp.	272-5300	14.4	Mad House Society	449-3894	14.4
Elsewhere/Dean's Elsewhere	492-0368	14.4	Magic Circus	993-3239	14.4
Emerald Donjon	967-9687	14.4	Magnolia	833-9216	9600
Empty Pockets	831-7979	14.4	Manila Bay	995-1564	14.4
Encounters BBS, The	814-1491	14.4	Meat Head BBS	491-5236	14.4
Enforcer, The	331-1641	14.4	Mecca Motorola Amiga Users Grp	938-5286	14.4
Equal Access Cafe	494-4461	2400	Medieval Square/Time Sync	820-0452	14.4
Etelio	548-1442	2400	Memory Alpha BBS	864-6653	14.4
Excentric Hideaway	589-0667	2400	Mensa	840-4865	9600
Express It	930-8707	14.4	Merlin's, Node 1	247-9570	14.4
Eye	265-1342	14.4	Merlin's, Node 2	247-6404	14.4
Falcon's Nest Node1	581-7827	9600	Merlin's Node 3	247-8640	14.4
File Base Alpha/Mortgage Nat	494-9921	14.4	Mesa MicroSystems	641-7013	14.4
File Cabinet	872-1236	14.4	Methodical Chaos	848-7462	14.4
File FreeWay	841-1731	28.8	Midiland	997-7243	14.4
FileWorks	350-9519	14.4	Midkemia	808-9629	14.4
Fire and Ice Hotel Node1	246-1314	14.4	Midnight Express	447-0187	2400
Fire and Ice Hotel Node2	246-9132	14.4	Midnight Express Amiga	815-0158	14.4
FireHouse BBS	547-9402	14.4	Mike's Place	832-4479	14.4
Firestarter	970-4626	14.4	Mike's Sunshine Resort	877-8748	14.4
Flashover! BBS	324-4856	14.4	Moon Valley Triangle	942-9228	14.4
FlatLand Center	649-1542	14.4	Moonlight Trading Post	404-2252	14.4
FlatLand Center	649-0744	14.4	Mountain Man	867-7244	2400
Foothills	480-5352	14.4	Mr. Wizard's	994-0113	19.2
Foxy's Loft	412-2480	14.4	Musgrave's Ranch	866-9633	14.4
Frankenmuth Gar and Brill	945-4322	14.4	Mystical Winds	926-3728	2400
Fun State BBS	971-4205	14.4	National Congress for Men/chid	840-4752	9600
Gallery	834-0953	14.4	NCC-1603	844-1603	14.4
Garbage Dump	275-1139	9600	Neighborhood Net	495-1737	2400
Garbage Dump	998-2522	2400	Neon Cafe/CornerStone	873-1404	14.4
Garbage Dump	998-8975	9600	Nick's Place	789-1100	14.4
Garfield's Place	278-1134	2400	NightHawk	582-1127	14.4
Genie	775-7337	2400	NightLife	516-1252	2400
Getaway, The	992-6824	14.4	Nightshadow	482-8801	14.4
Ghost Rider	439-2226	14.4	Nile-Line(Yuma)	329-0691	14.4
GIF World	598-0239	14.4	Nova Star Highlander 1	878-3952	14.4
Gillian's Island	486-5711	14.4	Nova Star Highlander 2	878-3929	14.4
Global Village	759-6319	14.4	Number Cruncher	966-5033	2400
Green Igwana	396-6556	14.4	Oasis, The	780-0241	2400
Greg's Spitfire	274-8813	14.4	ODAAT BBS(RIP'd)	917-3389	14.4
Genesis 2.2	230-8644	14.4	Olestra (Mortville Castle)	271-4496	2400
Hack's Place	437-2259	14.4	On-Line Information	471-4311	14.4
Hades Project	949-7188	14.4	OnRamp	966-7267	14.4
Ham Shack	247-6034	14.4	Open Connections	967-0761	14.4
Hangar 18	942-4904	14.4	Open Door West/Young Guns	486-5142	14.4
Hawian Hawk	272-4887	14.4	Orac2	277-1334	14.4
Hawk's Aerie	873-2755	14.4	PAUGS	878-8505	2400
HeadRush BBS	864-7052	14.4	PC-AUG(RIP'd)	952-0638	14.4



NAME	NUMBER	SPEED	NAME	NUMBER	SPEED
Paradise BBS, The	435-6546	14.4	Smoky's Place Node 4	547-0920	14.4
Paradise City	892-7001	2400	SmorgasBord #1	925-0086	14.4
Paradise Island Cafe	862-3560	9600	SmorgasBord #2	925-0240	14.4
Paragon/Next Generation	938-8288	14.4	SmorgasBord #3	925-0038	14.4
PC Pursuit Local Access I	254-0040	2400	SmorgasBord #5	932-5374	9600
PC Pursuit Local Access II	254-0244	1200	Snoopy's RA	934-7485	14.4
PC Pursuit Local Access III	252-9540	2400	Software Excellence by Design	375-0531	14.4
Pegasus AZ	641-3136	14.4	Software Galore	482-6957	14.4
Pegasus II Software	491-0620	14.4	Solaris VII	935-3070	14.4
Penguin Black Belt	939-0154	14.4	Somewhere Out There	988-9707	14.4
Perot On-Line Forum(RIP'd)	945-5747	14.4	Sons of Galtches(RIP'd)	247-1160	14.4
Petting Zoo Node1	493-1937	14.4	Sound FX	235-6876	14.4
Petting Zoo Node2	992-0019	9600	Source #1	997-1052	28.8
Petting Zoo Node3	493-0838	14.4	Source #2	943-1262	14.4
Phantasm	991-7042	14.4	Southern Delight	978-3565	14.4
Phantom's Universe	844-7604	14.4	Special Friends BBS	838-0712	14.4
Phoenix Bug	545-9130	14.4	Spectrum Images	997-6500	14.4
Phoenix Matchmaker	649-9099	2400	Speedway	404-8863	14.4
Phoenix Public Library	534-7777	1200	Sports Cards	893-0096	14.4
Phoenix Public Library	534-8688	14.4	Squire Malcolm's BBS	634-5172	14.4
Phoenix PC Users Group	222-5491	14.4	Squirrel's Nest	784-7698	14.4
Phoenix Red Ryder	870-1810	14.4	Starbase Celestron	994-3785	2400
Phoenix Tower	838-9289	14.4	Starlink, The	484-4817	14.4
Phone Company, The	838-8280	14.4	StarShip	944-6018	28.8
Pilot's LightHouse	939-6117	14.4	Staring Deep Space 5	649-0285	14.4
Pinnacle	951-8379	14.4	Station Desert	935-7961	14.4
Playpen	943-3876	9600	Stonehenge	947-2223	9600
Point of Know Return	867-0488	14.4	Storm Damage	866-0501	14.4
Polaris	831-4006	14.4	Strike Eagle II	911-1737	14.4
Popcode BBS, The	242-3959	14.4	Sunrise	584-7395	14.4
Pope's Place, The	968-2499	2400	Super Nova	870-3929	14.4
Post Office	878-9875	14.4	Superstition BBS	841-8713	14.4
Pride	965-0285	16.8	Swamp, The	649-1507	14.4
Prismnet	395-1111	28.8	Systems consulting	438-7088	14.4
PrintShop BBS(RIP'd)	998-1543	14.4	Talamo's Coffin	231-6451	14.4
ProLine	939-7376	14.4	Tasty Petunia Vomit	813-1859	14.4
Pros Apologian	973-3736	14.4	Technoids Anonymous #1	898-4878	14.4
Programmer's Workshop	897-9549	14.4	Technoids Anonymous #2	899-5233	14.4
Public Agenda	495-5472	2400	Technoids Anonymous #3	786-9131	14.4
Pyramids of Mars, The	998-4137	14.4	Terminal Wellness	263-0650	2400
Pyramids of Mars, The	998-4244	14.4	Terra BBS	336-0346	14.4
Quantum Leap	937-1350	9600	Terrestrial #1	945-8416	14.4
Quick Dog	862-3368	2400	Terrestrial #2	423-8967	14.4
Quiet Room	929-0731	14.4	Terrestrial #3	423-8860	14.4
Ragami	230-1463	9600	Terrestrial #4	423-9490	14.4
Rainbow BBS	996-2294	14.4	This Old Box	849-7675	2400
Ranch and Cattle	943-1497	14.4	Thunderbolt's BBS	272-3571	14.4
Rare Readers	756-2855	14.4	Tiger's Den	992-9879	14.4
Rattletrap BBS	996-0560	9600	Time Rider's Guild	486-4604	14.4
Realm of Black Station	516-8804	14.4	Time Warp	486-1043	2400
Realm of Darkness BBS	245-362	14.4	Toga BBS	491-5318	14.4
Rebel Alliance	493-1435	19.2	Tom's Haven	966-6506	14.4
Rebound	956-7484	14.4	Touchstones #1	843-0408	14.4
Red Dwarf	964-1312	2400	Touchstones #2	843-0304	14.4
Remotcon HQ BBS	661-1881	14.4	Toyland BBS	253-6492	14.4
Resume Exchange BBS	947-4283	14.4	Trading Post BBS Node1	867-1715	9600
Rick's Country Club	948-1490	14.4	Trading Post BBS Node2	867-2229	19.2
Roadie's Transient Terminal	371-1618	14.4	Tr-Connection	994-8081	14.4
Roadkill	834-6644	14.4	Tr-Sitar	961-1406	9600
Robert's Place	982-1741	14.4	True Sight Reality(verified)	943-3588	14.4
Rock Beyond the Billow	482-1851	28.8	True Vision Node1	789-9112	14.4
Rock Garden Node1	220-5973	14.4	True Vision Node2	789-0291	14.4
Rock Garden Node2	220-6978	14.4	Twilight Software	841-769	14.4
Rose Cross	962-3579	14.4	Twilight Zone (Commie)	827-2706	14.4
Roundhouse, The	336-0794	14.4	Tymnet I	254-5811	1200
Route 66	979-2858	14.4	Tymnet II	258-0554	2400
RPCUG BBS, The Node1	433-2940	14.4	Tymnet III	258-5258	14.4
RPCUG BBS, The Node2	246-2252	9600	T2's Playground	827-2206	14.4
Rusty's WildCat! BBS	936-3692	2400	UFP Data Bank	930-9202	14.4
Safe 'n Secure BBS	870-8004	14.4	Unknown BBS, The	934-5857	2400
Saguro Station	846-2318	14.4	USA-Net	996-5155	14.4
Scorpion's Lair	396-6993	14.4	Valley of the Sun, Node 1	896-9229	9600
Scott's Spot BBS	982-8156	14.4	Valley of the Sun, Node 2	866-9303	9600
Screaming Data	938-5569	14.4	Virgin Rain Forest	835-0421	14.4
SEVAC BBS	968-5165	14.4	Virtual "Continuum"	997-9243	14.4
Seventh Circle	463-3222	28.8	Warzone	933-9243	14.4
Shadow Keep/Lost BBS II	245-0919	14.4	Waterhouse Online, The	930-0457	2400
Shadow Zone	242-8330	14.4	White Tiger (RIP'd)	935-2537	14.4
Shadow Zone	249-3372	14.4	Wild Side	258-8351	14.4
Short Line BBS, The	982-0026	14.4	Window In Time Node1	253-1946	14.4
ShortTron BBS (Multiline)	223-0001	2400	Window In Time Node2	253-1069	14.4
Short Circuit	937-5055	14.4	Window In Time Node3	253-7169	14.4
SinCity BBS	937-7494	9600	Who's There?	872-1419	14.4
Sinnovent Pleasures	841-4729	14.4	Wish Book Node1	340-9516	14.4
Sir Charles' Arcade	843-4314	14.4	Wish Book Node2	253-4472	14.4
SkateShop	878-2206	14.4	Wish Book Node3	258-5455	14.4
Sleep Robber	985-1088	14.4	Wish Book Node4	258-7113	14.4
Small Business Exchange	494-0812	14.4	Wish Book Nodes	258-7362	14.4
SmallTime BBS	983-7204	14.4	Wildards World	431-8417	14.4
Smoky's Place Node 1	547-1255	14.4	Wolf Den	433-1859	14.4
Smoky's Place Node 2	547-1206	14.4	Zephyr	334-6506	14.4
Smoky's Place Node 3	547-0644	14.4			



GLOBAL ELECTRONIC YOUR BULLETIN

The Personal Internet Mail Processor (PIMP) is an option module for eSoft, Inc.'s bulletin board system, The Bread Board System (TBBS). It allows any TBBS bulletin board to interact with the global Internet for electronic mail and USENET News Groups, and it provides one of the most integrated presentations of e-mail and newsgroups of any mail solution available in the online community. Callers to a TBBS system that has the PIMP option module will deal with global electronic mail in virtually exactly the same way they deal with local system e-mail - no ugly kludges or commands to learn to send mail to friends on CompuServe, Prodigy, America Online, or thousands of other sites in over 130 countries. If they have the Internet mail address of the person they wish to reach, they can send them mail without any further instruction at all. And all of your callers will have their own Internet e-mail address on your system. Anyone on earth can send them e-mail from anywhere, at any time.

PIMP imports RFC-822 style message files into the TBBS message base in real time. As a full TBBS option module, it loads with the BBS and operates continuously to import received mail to the message database, and export messages entered by callers for delivery to the Internet. It's primary function is as a message database import/export utility and mail gateway. And its main strength is that you do not have to take the system down at all - it operates in conjunction with TBBS to constantly import and export mail.

In the most common configuration, to participate in the global exchange of electronic mail and USENET newsgroups, you need three things:

1. A functioning TBBS bulletin board system.
2. A dial-up UUCP host account with an Internet Service Provider.
3. The Personal Internet Mail Processor (PIMP).

For delivery, PIMP is quite flexible:

1. It can work with an external Unix-style Unix Copy Program (UUCP) program such as Waffle's UUCICO or FXUUCICO.
2. It includes its own internal UUCICO program that uses any unused BBS line and modem to dial your host and deliver mail as necessary, and pickup any waiting mail from your UUCP account host.
3. It is fully compatible with eSoft's Internet Protocol Adapter (IPAD) for direct connections to the Internet and the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) capability for instant message delivery, as well as Net News Transport Protocol (NNTP) provided by IPAD.

FEATURES:

SEAMLESS ELECTRONIC MAIL:

PIMP is very tightly integrated into the TBBS system. Callers simply enter an Internet address in the normal TO field of the message, and that's where the message goes. They can use the normal Reply function of TBBS to respond to mail received from anywhere in the world. File attachments are still attached, messages can be forwarded, all the functions of the TBBS message system work as they do locally. Beyond the Internet addressing itself, your callers already know how to send and receive mail to any site on earth.

INTERNAL UUCP G PROTOCOL:

PIMP can use any unused BBS line to dial your host and do a full UUCP session, supporting Windows 7 and packet sizes up to 1024 bytes in size. This provides optimum UUCP protocol session performance to deliver mail and newsgroup messages to your host, and receive mail and newsgroup messages waiting for your BBS. You can use any available BBS line to do this, and can schedule this activity to occur as often as you like. Messages entered by callers can be scanned out and delivered in as little as one minute. Messages received from your host will be processed immediately after the call is completed.

USENET NEWSGROUPS:

PIMP can support an unlimited number of newsgroups, and an unlimited number of newsgroup messages. The TBBS total limitation of 60,000 messages in the message base still applies. Newsgroups are very easy to configure using TBBS's topical message base structure. PIMP can toss a single message to multiple newsgroups for crossposting, and it handles long subject lines and RE message threading. Messages longer than the TBBS limit of 9999 bytes are broken into a series of successive messages. PIMP can also process satellite delivered .BAG files directly.

FILE ATTACHMENTS:

PIMP automatically and transparently deals with TBBS message file attachments. Messages received that include UUENCODED files are automatically decoded and presented as TBBS message file attachments to your callers and would appear to them exactly as any local message with a file attachment. Messages your callers send with a file attachment will automatically be UUENCODED for delivery to the Internet in a way that any recipient can easily decode to get the original file attachment intact.

MAILING LIST SERVER:

You can host your own Internet mailing list on your TBBS system. Correspondents can add themselves to the list automatically by sending an e-mail message to the system, and likewise remove themselves from the mailing list with a simple e-mail message. When join-

ONIC MAIL FROM BOARD

Jack Rickard's Personal Internet Mail Processor

\$299

ing the list, they will automatically receive any file you specify as a welcome text file. All messages addressed to the list will automatically be reflected to all list correspondents - no matter where they are.

FTP FILE SERVER:

PIMP can also act as a file server on a global basis. Correspondents from anywhere on the planet can send a simple e-mail message to your system requesting a specific file. PIMP will search the directories YOU make "public" for the corresponding file, and automatically send a reply message back with the file in UUENCODED format.

INFORMATION SERVER:

PIMP will allow you to define specific "information" addresses. Any correspondent can send a simple message to this address with no instructions of any kind in the message - just the act of sending mail to the address will cause an automatic e-mail reply containing any file you specify. In this way, you can make product information, company profiles, newsletters, or anything else available on a global basis for anyone to retrieve - all entirely automatically.

BOUNCE MESSAGES:

For every message your system receives, PIMP will automatically search your user database to see if the message is deliverable. If it is, the caller will find the message in their message waiting chain the next time they call. If the message is not deliverable, PIMP will automatically send out a reply message noting that no such user is registered at your site.

UUCP SERVER:

PIMP can actually act as a UUCP hub server as well as a client. You can setup callers with UUCP accounts allowing them to dial up automatically and retrieve mail and newsgroups using any UUCP mail package. Their mail will be waiting for them, as well as any newsgroups they specify they want to receive. And multiple callers or other BBS systems can call your multiline TBBS simultaneously to do UUCP mail transfers.

Each account is actually a subdomain under your domain. For example, if your domain name is BIGBBS.COM, you can setup hundreds of accounts with subdomains under yours such as REDSTAR.BIGBBS.COM, WHITE.BIGBBS.COM, JOESBBS.BIGBBS.COM, SALLY.BIGBBS.COM and so forth. You can even build "pyramids" of systems connected via UUCP.

TBBS APPLICATION SPAWNING:

eSoft also makes a database development option module called The Data Base System or TDBS. Almost ALL third party add-ons and programs for TBBS are actually written as a TDBS application. PIMP is NOT PIMP is a 100% assembly language true option mod-

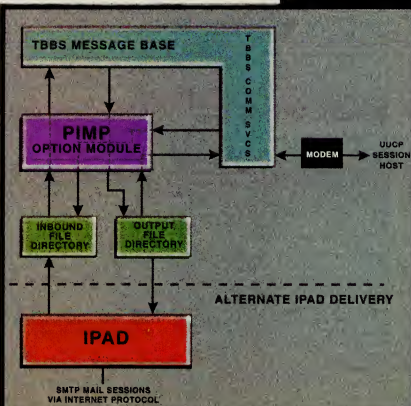
ule for TBBS similar to TDBS, ULTRACHAT, SYSOM, or other eSoft option modules. PIMP DOES NOT REQUIRE TDBS or ANY OTHER TBBS OPTION MODULE FOR ANYTHING.

But PIMP CAN spawn or run other TDBS applications on receipt of mail or on creation of mail. In fact, it can run ANY TDBS application you specify and even run separate applications for receipt of mail from that run on creation of mail. So if you have some special mail pre or post processing you need for your application, you can develop this in TDBS and PIMP will run it for you. In fact, there are several such applications already available in the community.

IPAD COMPATIBILITY:

One of the most exciting developments for Internet connectivity is eSoft's Internet Protocol Adapter or IPAD. This component connects your TBBS system directly to the Internet using the Internet Protocol over leased lines or SLIP connections. PIMP and IPAD work together to provide almost instant global mail. The IPAD and PIMP can share inbound/outbound message directories with the IPAD providing SMTP client/server capabilities. PIMP feeds outbound mail to IPAD in the correct format and IPAD delivers it to its destination via SMTP. SMTP received by IPAD simply appears in PIMP's inbound message directory and PIMP adds it directly to the TBBS message base. USENET news is handled similarly.

To Order Call:
(303)973-6038



The BIG List



Advertise your electronic bulletin board/online information service in Boardwatch Magazine. Let our readers know who you are and what you're doing with online technology. To order a BBS ad in the Boardwatch Classified BBS ad section, call the Boardwatch BBS at (303) 973-4222 and use our online ad entry system. In addition to standard list information, enter up to 255 characters of text describing your online service - all for \$25 per month. Master Card or Visa only.

MicroSellar BBS (201)239-0001 Verona, New Jersey since 03/83. Sysop: Mark Rapp. Using PCBoard 15.2 with 20 lines on MS-DOS with 10000 MB storage. Hayes at 28800 bps. No fee. PCBoard 15.x alpha site. Nu's preferred BBS for the pro 11 yrs running. HiSpeed lines. Local #'s available for easy access. Best-quality latest files games info gold mine. Many mail networks including Internet. Trial access provided. Major credit cards.

Central Core BBS (201)575-8991 Montville, New Jersey since 01/85. Sysop: Mike Cocke. Using PCBoard 15.2 with 3 lines on MS-DOS with 3500 MB storage. ZyXel at 19200 bps. No fee. No fee for basic services, small fee for enhanced. A BBS for grownups of all ages. Free Internet trial access. Member ILink & BASNet echnomail networks. Online national weather reports. Scrabble & trivia tournaments. Many technical interest files. No porn

SuccessNet (201)653-6228 Hoboken, New Jersey since 11/94. Sysop: Al Arango. Using TBBS 2.2 with 4 lines on MS-DOS with 2000 MB storage. US Robotics at 28800 bps. No fee. Want to succeed in business? Start or expand your own. Buy or sell, make contacts, sources of financing, business software, information, online databases, Internet e-mail, newsgroups, QWK support, UUCP support, your fast lane for success. Call now.

The Garden of Eden BBS (201)839-5401 Ringwood, New Jersey since 11/92. Sysop: Frank Molino. Using WildCat 3.9 with 3 lines on MS-DOS with 800 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. \$50 Annual fee. 16 CDs online with over 95,000 files including adult gifs. New in-house scans added weekly. Adultlinks & Fidonet Conferences. Charge cards accepted for instant access. Visa MC Amex. Over 90 online doors & games Adultlinks, Fidonet, Doornet. Don't miss.

BEACON STUDIOS BBS (201)863-5253 Union City, New Jersey since 01/93. Sysop: Conrad Scott. Using MajorBBS 6.21 with 23 lines on MS-DOS with 15090 MB storage. Supra at 14400 bps. \$50 Hourly fee. Free downloads for new users with 60 min. allowed daily. Over 7,000 files on 14 CDs. New Jersey's only WorldLink & ChatLink BBS linked every night. Internet e-mail, newsgroups, MajorNet, Fidonet and games.

Jezebel's Parlour BBS (201)927-2932 Flanders, New Jersey since 04/92. Sysop: Beverly Delisa. Using TBBS 2.2 with 12 lines on MS-DOS with 3720 MB storage. US Robotics at 19200 bps. \$50 Annual fee. Over 7 gigabytes of files, including adult graphics. New in-house scanned GIF files added each week. Online games and databases, user to user chat, conference areas, and adult matchmaking. The BBS with the feminine touch.

The Starship II BBS (201)935-1485 Rutherford, New Jersey since 07/80. Sysop: Philip J. Buonomo. Using TBBS 2.2 with 32 lines on MS-DOS with 10000 MB storage. V.32bis at 14400 bps. No fee. Operating for 14+ years, Starship is one of the longest running, most successful bbs systems ever. Free public access, adult & non-adult topics, chat, files, games, & databases. USR, Hayes, Teletit, v.32bis 19.2 kbps modems online, full internet access.

T-Shirts Online (207)865-1806 Freeport, Maine since 06/94. Sysop: Mike DeVaudreuil. Using PCBoard 15.1 with 1 line on MS-DOS with 540 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. No fee. Upload your favorite graphic file and we'll custom print it on a high quality t-shirt and mail it to you. High resolution, full color pictures. If you can see it on your computer screen, we can put it on a t-shirt.

ACE InfoSystems (209)833-0291 Tracy, California since 08/94. Sysop: Don Mankin. Using MajorBBS 6.25 with 24 lines on MS-DOS with 1.7 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. \$60 Annual fee. Fifteen multi-player games including CyberTank, Mutants, Swords & Sorcery, Trade Wars, TeleArena, Game Connection w/4 player DOOM. Also, shopping mall, FAX services, 16 CDs, Internet FTP & Telnet. Telnet to 199.190.76.2 or aceinfo.com VISA/MC.

Exxtasy Adult BBS (209)862-4045 Pine Mt. Lake, California since 06/86. Sysop: Victoria Cummings. Using MajorBBS 6.12 with 4 lines on MS-DOS with 10000 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. \$25 Annual fee. Large hi-res adult file collection with thousands of erotic files. New member bonus - adult burlesque video tape of our California coeds with each membership. Also feature chat, online games, and more. Visa and Mastercard accepted online.

The Invention Factory BBS (212)274-8110 New York City, New York since 03/84. Sysop: Michael Susell. Using PCBoard 15.1 with 48 lines on MS-DOS with 99999 MB storage. US Robotics at 28800 bps. \$15 Monthly fee. New York's best BBS. Free downloads for new users. More than 14 gig of shareware and freeware. Internet, Usenet, e-mail. Large adult files area. MC Visa Amex.

Real Exposure (212)691-2679 New York City, New York since 06/93. Sysop: Joey Haylock. Using WildCat 3.9 with 13 lines on MS-DOS with 6000 MB storage. Practical Peris at 14400 bps. \$45 Half Year fee. Unique community of interactive NYC personalities meet here nightly for fun, informative chatting. REX is different: it's about people, learning and helping. This is NY's most creative environment. Free I-net email/news, FIDO, 18 CDROMs and much more.

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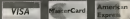
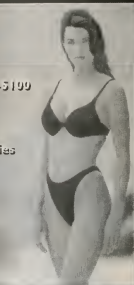
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Computer Wizards BBS (412)241-3960 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania since 03/91. Sysop: Paul R. Wossido. Using Sapphire 4.09 with 1 line on MS-DOS with 700 MB storage. Boca at 14400 bps. No fee. Free downloads on first call. No ratios. Optional subscriber areas (\$10/3mo or \$25/yr) include home-based business conference and Paul's Private Portfolio of original photos of Pittsburgh swimmers & lingerie models in both 24-bit JPG and 8-bit GIF.

the spa! (413)536-4365 Springfield, Massachusetts since 02/89. Sysop: Matthew de Jongh. Using TBBS 2.3 with 32 lines on MS-DOS with 25000 MB storage. Hayes at 28800 bps. \$45 Annual fee. Voted #15 in 1994 Boardwatch Contest. Largest system in Western Mass. Over 5,000 active users. Very active chat and multiuser games. 30 CD-ROMs online. Full Internet access & slip. Local community information. Local newspaper and ABC-TV online.

The Back Door BBS (414)744-1962 Milwaukee, Wisconsin since 06/91. Sysop: Paul Parkinson. Using TBBS 2.2 with 17 lines on MS-DOS with 15000 MB storage. Microcom at 28800 bps. \$40 Annual fee. 6 adult message networks, 23 CD's online (XXX & shareware), Virtual User, WildSide, Legends, remote file transfers, catalog shopping, chatlines, magazines, interchange dialer, Chat Poker, an adults only BBS with so much to offer. (Credit cards taken)

Liberty BBS (415)325-6781 Palo Alto, California since 07/92. Sysop: David Salch. Using MajorBBS 6.21 with 183 lines on MS-DOS with 15360 MB storage. ZyXel at 19200 bps. \$25 Monthly fee. Local from 8 California area codes & Chicago. Nationwide ChatLink, WorldLink, MailLink, MajorNet, Internet & Usenet newsgroups. Use your modem to call 800-474-1818 for local & low cost SprintNet nationwide access info. Chat, games, news, & much more.

The Skull (415)579-5544 San Francisco, California since 08/84. Sysop: The Dozer. Using PCBoard 15.2 with 16 lines on MS-DOS with 20000 MB storage. US Robotics at 28800 bps. \$10 Quarterly fee. Highest quality Asian adult graphics available today. Shutt CD-ROM. Full motions adult video. Our only objective is quality adult images.

INTERACT (415)961-6911 Palo Alto, California since 12/94. Sysop: Eric Knight. Using TBBS 2.2 with 8 lines on MS-DOS with 500 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. No fee. The interactive entertainment system. Connect with us today and get instant free access. On INTERACT, there are no time limits. Hook-up and spend all night in INTERChat, our live action chat system. INTERACT is for adults 18 and over. Give us a call.

ComputerLink Online Incorporated (416)233-5410 Toronto, Ontario since 05/92. Sysop: Bill Campbell. Using MajorBBS 6.21 with 66 lines on MS-DOS with 15000 MB storage. US Robotics at 19200 bps. \$8.90 Monthly fee. Canada's largest graphical BBS. Featuring over 120,000 files with unlimited downloading, new files daily via satellite feed, Internet and Majornet, Traders 2002, adult files, online conversation, free new user seminars, free-trial memberships.

The Adults At Play BBS (416)237-1010 Toronto, ON, Canada since 08/93. Sysop: Dan Williams. Using WildCat 4.01 with 2 lines on MS-DOS with 2500 MB storage. US Robotics at 14400 bps. \$30 Annual fee. Best all adult BBS north of the border. Internet email, Usenet, Throbneth, with 10,000's of adult messages. We also have an extensive XXX adult GIF and text file section with 1000's of files. 2nd Number 416-237-9337. For more info send email info@aaplay.org

RAIN (Random Access Information Network) (503)695-3250 Corbett, Oregon since 01/88. Sysop: Mariel. Using WildCat 4.0 with 8 lines on MS-DOS with 10000 MB storage. AT&T at 14400 bps. \$50 Annual fee. Credit cards available online. Demo users 15 m. daily, subscribers 90m. Extensive file areas for all operating systems. Latest shareware & GIFs. RIME, Internet, Usenet & satellite feeds. 400+ conference areas, chats, CDROM server, Timedoor.

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Hi-Tech's Place (516)757-0210 Long Island, New York since 07/91. Sysop: Hi-Tech Pete. Using PCBoard 15.0 with 16 lines on MS-DOS with 23000 MB storage. US Robotics at 19200 bps. \$40 Annual fee. BBS for graphics scans and shareware. Over 80,000 quality GIF & hi-color scans online, also DCS, Windows 3.0 and GIFs. Credit membership online. One of the largest BBS in the northeast. Internet access. Telnet htp.com. Connect and teck us out for free.

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Alice's Restaurant Adult BBS (516)868-5683 Merrick, New York since 11/91. Sysop: Alice George. Using MajorBBS 6.21 with 12 lines on MS-DOS with 1000 MB storage. US Robotics at 28800 bps. \$40 Quarterly fee. Adults only. Uncensored chat and message areas. CD-ROM file library.

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The Gamer's Zone (717)285-4073 Mountville, Pennsylvania since 08/94. Sysop: Brett Hart. Using Searchlight 4.0 with 2 lines on MS-DOS with 1100 MB storage. Infotel at 14400 bps. No fee. The Ultimate Gamer's System. Lots of hints and cheats, plus your favorite shareware and/or like id, apogee. Loads of game and game related files. Over 1 gig of files with more on the way. Online games and more. Internet email and newsgroups soon.

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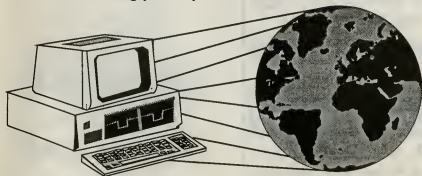
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DVORAK ONLINE by John C. Dvorak

THE THINKING (OR LACK THEREOF) BEHIND THE PURCHASE OF INTERCHANGE

The Ziff family is now officially out of the computer magazine and information business having sold their last remnant Interchange the still-in-beta-online service. I was never much of a fan of the idea that Ziff should get involved in on-line services, but was I wrong as they nabbed \$50 million dollars from the dolt-ish

AT&T, a company that will eventually surpass Xerox as the big dumb ape out there throwing money away as fast as possible. Xerox, as you recall had a string of failed acquisitions in the 1970s and 1980s until someone decided that maybe selling cheap copiers was a better idea than running a disk drive company. One of the saddest days in history was when Xerox bought Shugart, the company that invented the 5 1/4-inch floppy disk and was largely responsible for the growth of the personal computer business. It was the leading maker of floppy disks and hard disks when Xerox got involved. In no time the company was broke. There is a laundry list from Scientific Data Systems to Ventura (the product that was poised to knock off Pagemaker) botched by Xerox.

As an aside let me tell you a couple of humorous stories about Ventura, which became a fiasco from the day Xerox bought out the small developer who put his life's work into this product.

Ventura, at the time of its release in the mid 1980s was the alternative to Pagemaker. The difference was that it was more powerful than Pagemaker and ran on a PC instead of a Mac. In fact it was very impressive and could have become a dominant force in the page layout battle. Then Xerox came along and now Ventura isn't even mentioned alongside Quark and Pagemaker. The code has recently been bought by Corel and we can expect it to re-emerge as a low-ball home-office substitute for the professional products.

HOPELESS SITUATION

I recall the time that Xerox began marketing (if I can be so liberal as to use the term marketing) Ventura. I had asked for a review copy to see what it could do. Simple enough, yes? No. Before Xerox would send a review copy of a sample box of software they sent me a complex document whereby I'd sign away all my legal right to sue Xerox and would hold them harmless and would have to pay court costs if by some chance the product should fly out of my hands and kill or injure someone. There were a slew of other provisos in this document too. Rather than go over this ludicrous document with an expensive lawyer I just bagged the whole idea after complaining to the then optimistic developer of the package who was convinced he'd be a billionaire after partnering with Xerox. I wrote about

the entire fiasco in Infoworld and left it at that saying this product was going nowhere with these jokers selling it.

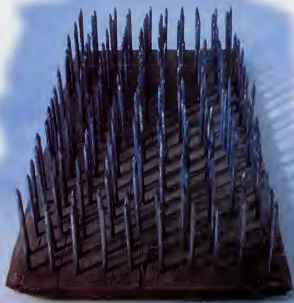
I was amused a couple of years later when a newspaper columnist and friend of mine told me how he had gotten a copy of Ventura to review and he gave it a rave review, but they wanted it back. It's a given that review software isn't returned because of the inconvenience and is usually part of the reviewers fee. This is an industry standard practice that sometimes skews reviews. Of course it skews reviews in favor of the manufacturers, so you'd think they'd want the practice to continue. Not so Xerox. They wanted the package back! He insisted on keeping it for comparison reviews in the future. Somehow they talked him into switching the original box for a new package which he did. So he tells me, "On every page is emblazoned SAMPLE VERSION NOT FOR COMMERCIAL USE across the page in bold letters on a diagonal. And I gave them a good review!" It was apparent that Xerox didn't have a clue.

REMEMBER PEN-BASED COMPUTING?

So now we have AT&T picking up the gauntlet. These folks want to desperately be involved in some way with the information super whatchamacallit. So they hear a report about how pen-based computing is going to set the world on fire. So they start EO and get the notion more ink than it deserves. A slew of pen-based computer companies came and go. Exactly why this phenomenon occurred still mystifies me because the technology was obviously not there for this to become popular. First of all the handwriting recognition was a joke. The screen resolution was a joke. The machines were too expensive. I can go on and on with the obvious as I did a few years back when the notion surfaced. Nobody wanted to hear it then. My primary argument remains: keyboards are on the technology curve and manual handwriting is in the past. Thus these things are retro! Get a clue. Oh no, "you're wrong" I'd hear. The venture capitalists (in particular) would spew the nonsense that "executives can't type" and this would be perfect for them. My retort: But executives who can't type would never figure out one of these things either. The whole idea seemed hopeless and I was stunned by some of the brand name people who bought into it. I never saw the research report that triggered all this, but I'd love to get my hands on it someday.

So AT&T obviously sees this report and they go whole hog designing and manufacturing a machine the EO. How many did they sell? 15? Whatever they sold didn't stop them from buying the company called GO Corporation, which is the company that really trig-

In addition to his weekly syndicated radio call-in show, "Software/Hard-talk," syndicated newspaper columns, magazine writing for *MacUser*, *PC Computing*, *DEC Professional*, *Information Technology*, and his featured "Inside Track" column in *PC Magazine*, Dvorak is the author of several best-selling books, including *Dvorak's Inside Track to DOS & PC Performance*, *Dvorak's Guide to PC Telecommunications*, and *Dvorak's Inside Track to the Mac*.



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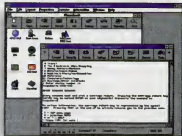
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December 1994



May 30, 1994

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gered the whole phenomenon. I'd always refer to them as GO Broke Corporation to annoy my friends who actually invested in the idea. The whole pen-based phenomenon more or less went into limbo a couple of years ago and GO went: shelved by AT&T along with EO. They may as well have flushed the money down the dumper.

A FABLE

But it takes money to make money as they say. Can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs. So AT&T is now on the information superhighway bandwagon. These guys are laughable. If they'd look under their feet they'd see that they OWN the information superhighway. DUH!

Here's a fable:

There was a company called AT&T, American Tunneling and Toilets. They owned all the sewers in the United States and had a pretty sweet deal. The sewers were installed with the help of the government and all paid for except maintenance. The homeowners who had the sewers coming to their toilets had to pay AT&T on a usage basis to use the sewers which were metered. Every time someone took a crap, they'd be charged a sewer fee. If they took a pee, they'd be charged. If they flushed a goldfish, they'd be charged. Money was rolling in. One day a new executive came along and he was a fretter. He worried that people would stop crapping and peeing and flushing goldfish, thus the sewer revenue would slow down. Others told him not to worry, there were more and more people in the country and that alone would account for growth. And there were the more efficient toilets too. These new toilets ISDN, Integrated Sewer Drainage Negotiator, made things more efficient with less strain on the sewer. A one gallon flush instead of a 12 gallon flush like in the old days. It confused him. He figured he should charge more for people who use ISDN even though on a per crap basis the income should be the same and the revenues would remain steady with less stress on the system. It somehow didn't seem right to him. For some reason he thought that, well, he wasn't sure. But charging more was a good idea. The local Sewage company spin-offs such as US Waste figured the best way to approach this was to ban ISDN toilets or discourage their use. They weren't sure why, but they figured there were better ways to get people to use the system more. So AT&T and US Waste and a number of

other companies decided to open a chain of greasy spoon restaurants where food was real cheap and where you'd be sure to get a case of diarrhea and be forced to use the toilet over and over, thus racking up the bill and making more money for the sewer provider. And so they did. And that's what we have today: crap.

NEW WAYS TO LOSE MONEY

So AT&T buys the Imagination network from Sierra online. It's a pure on-line chat system kind of thing that was jammed to the gills with users and somehow Sierra couldn't make money with early Pentium users obviously. Anyway, since it couldn't make money it was a perfect candidate for the muddy thinkers at AT&T: "Heck, we can NOT make money as well as the next guy! We have synergy when it comes to that!"

Which brings us to Interchange and proof that I'm in the wrong line of work. So here I was working at Ziff and for the life of me I can't get an Interchange account. Where's my betel A motto for a year. I finally get a demo of the product while at the PC/Computing office. Oh can anything possibly be slower than this? I ask myself as I sit bleary-eyed waiting for something, ANYTHING to happen. I figure there must be, gosh, five or six users online. No wonder it's so slow. And what does it do that isn't already done with AOL or a RIPscrip BBS? Hyperlinks? Oh, like the World Wide Web? Well, at least the screens are pretty. And they were. "It will run faster eventually," I'm told. "You're looking at debugging code." Oh, OK. That explains everything. So it seems to crash and I go on my merry way. If I complain about the thing being a waste of money, I'm told I'm missing the point or that I don't understand. I hear that some \$50 million dollars was spent on the project, an astronomical number as far as I'm concerned. The entire Ziff-Davis Corporation soon gets sold off to various entities for a good piece of change and Interchange remains with the Ziff brothers, unsold. "What a white elephant," I say to myself. Suddenly AT&T buys it for \$50 million dollars! High-fives everywhere.

And here we all, the readers, the BBS operators, the genteel all working for a living. And apparently we're all missing the point too! Anyone for doing an AOL clone? Call me! ♦

DVORAK'S RECIPE NOOK

Basmati Rice Done Correctly

The world's greatest rice is called Basmati rice and it comes from India. It's a smallish rice which looks like a miniature version of a Texas or California long grained rice. Pari, Tilda, Elephant Brand come to mind. Pari Brand is considered to be the best that is generally available. Most Middle Eastern stores sell this brand. There is a basmati-type rice from Bangladesh that has an even finer grain than Indian Basmati and you should look for it too.

COOKING RICE

There is a trick to cooking Basmati and a visit to a good Iranian restaurant and a talk with an Iranian chef will reveal the proper methodology. I used to use the so-called pilaf method to cook my rice dishes. This is where you start by frying the raw rice mixed with finely chopped onion in oil or butter then dumping a specific amount of water or broth into the mix usually 1 1/2 or 2 cups of water per cup of rice. Then there is the chinese steamed rice technique and you can even buy one of those Japanese rice cookers and cook rice that way. The Japanese rice is highly glutinous and not what we normally eat in the US or Europe. There are a lot of ways to cook rice and most of them fast and foolproof. It stuns me that people actually resort to the instant Uncle Ben's converted rice to make rice when rice is effortless to make and over a billion people, many hopeless peasants, make it daily. How dumb is the American home cook that he/she can't cook plain rice?

BEST RICE EVER

Anyway, while there are a lot of ways to cook rice, few recipes tell you how to cook basmati rice properly - the Iranian way. I first discovered properly cooked Basmati rice at an Iranian restaurant, obviously. It was the best rice dish I had ever eaten and it was plain unflavored rice! It took very little research to discover the methodology for this rice since most Iranians cook it this way. The French should cook rice this well. If you haven't noticed, the curious thing about the great French cuisine is that a French chef is clueless when it comes to cooking rice.

METHODOLOGY

The way good Basmati is cooked is as follows: Wash a cup of Basmati rice (the best brands are fairly clean, by the way pay extra for them!). Boil 6-10 cups of water in a pot and dump in the Basmati rice. Yes, Alice, this is boiled rice! Nobody talks about boiled rice much, but this is how it's done. You boil the rice for about 8 minutes depending on the rice itself. You actually have to keep an eye on this rice and watch how the cooking progresses. It takes making rice this way about 5 times before you get it right. It's a touchy feelie kind of thing. The rice starts to expand and the white inner grain can be seen. When the rice is about 3/4 cooked (a slightly firm inner core, eventually you can tell by merely looking at the rice when this point is reached) you dump it out of the water through a strainer or sieve. Before all the water runs off the rice you toss it back into the pot, cover the pot with a lid and leave the burner on for 30 seconds. Then shut it down and let the rice steam to completion. This is all tricky and you'll have to do it a few times to get the hang of it. The variables are: boiling time, how much water is drained off, burner reheat time, retained heat of pot.

Once you get the hang of it you'll discover there is more leeway than I'm letting on about. If you over boil, for example, you drain almost all the water off before steaming. If you do it too soon you leave in a lot of water and turn the burner on longer for the steaming period. The Iranians put a towel between the pot lid and the pot and the steam is absorbed into the cloth rather than condense and drip back into the rice. I use this technique when I showcase this rice for guests. After about a few minutes you can put in a chunk of butter to let it melt during the slow steaming process. Do not stir in right away or it will

coat the still steaming rice retarding the moisture absorption. After about 10-15 minutes you give the rice one quick stir with a fork to fluff it up and you have an absolutely perfect Basmati rice cooked properly. Each grain should be separate and the rice should not be mushy or rock hard. I am stunned when people cook this rice like Chinese rice. It sucks when cooked that way!

FEAR OF BOILING

I believe that there is some sort of negative preoccupation in the US about boiling anything except a hard boiled egg and so this kind of recipe has never caught on. We believe, probably thanks to food propagandists, that boiling rice robs it of its nutrients as if it were a carrot. In fact the boiling water is being absorbed INTO the rice. It's doing very little in the way of water extraction. I like to use a couple of large tablespoons of Knorr's, Borden or Oxo Chicken Bouillon powder (buy large jars of the stuff at Mexican mercados for less than the cost of a smallish pack of bouillon cubes) and put them into the boiling water. It's

absorbed into the rice and gives it a pleasant yellow color and nice flavor that kids seem to enjoy.

A final note regarding the Iranian technique. If you can find this technique discussed (not easy to find) it will usually be in a Middle Eastern cuisine cookbook. In there they will advise that Basmati rice be soaked for an hour or so. I have experimented with this soaking notion and have concluded that it is completely unnecessary, but I've

had Iranians quote me the dogma that the rice must be soaked. When asked if they've ever cooked it unsoaked they say no, "because it must be soaked." You can't argue with them about it. I finally realized that the reason for soaking has nothing to do with the final outcome. It creates a precooking condition which allows the rice to be cooked faster, that's all. The reason for the dogma is that in lesser developed countries where fuel and electrical power are at a premium, this is a better way to cook the rice since less fuel will be used. It's the only thing that makes sense. Anyway, once you discover the timing on this kind of rice cookery you'll never go back to regular rice. I've gotten to the point where I hate regular rice and refuse to cook anything but Basmati. Basmati rice is absolutely spectacular. Highly recommended. ♦



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1. Software Creations	506-566-7130	The Primary Source for Entertainment Software	PCBoard 104
2. EXEC-PC	414-789-4380	Largest dial up BBS for shareware software.	Custom 200
3. GLOB	703-578-4542	Gay & Lesbian Information, Internet email, live chat	TBBS 32
4. Monterey Gaming System	804-555-5555	Custom Interactive gaming and multi-user conferences	Custom 26
5. Blue Ridge Express	804-790-1875	Large file base with 3 Gigs of files and CD-ROMs, games	TBBS 33
6. Deep Cove BBS	708-827-3619	Large file base with 3 Gigs of files and CD-ROMs, games	TBBS 18
7. JynjaOnline	516-471-4625	News, publications, Internet email, Usenet newsgroups	TBBS 18
8. America's Suggestion Box	516-436-5390	Adults only, matchmaking, personals, email	1994 74
9. Lifestyle Online	806-775-7714	19 Gigs of shareware, adult lifestyle, personals, email	1994 54
10. Prodigy Genesis	214-590-8225	Chat system, adult lifestyle, email, online publications	TBBS 16
11. Chrysler	804-660-8678	Information and help of searching for people	1994 24
12. Pleasure Dome BBS	717-657-8699	34 CD-ROMs online, Internet email, chat	1994 24
13. INDEX System, The	413-536-4365	Adults only, matchmaking, Internet email, chat	1994 24
14. Pennsylvania Online	703-385-4325	Online publications, BBS file, Internet email, chat	1994 24
15. Springfield Public Access	215-443-7390	Internet accounts, 10 Gigs online, PCBoard 10	1994 24
16. OS/2 Shareware	614-224-1635	4000 Usenet newsgroups, 6 CD-ROMs, family BBS	1994 24
17. DSC	708-800-8344	OS/2 support and shareware files	1994 24
18. Wizard's Gate BBS	516-383-0727	No fees, full access on first call, 12 Gigs online	1994 24
19. Aquila BBS	916-481-8289	Internet, Usenet, FidoNet, shareware, online games	1994 24
20. Nashville Exchange, The	616-587-5311	Distribution & support for Telix	1994 24
delComOnline	317-359-5199	US & World News, Stock Information, national access	1994 24
File Shop BBS, The	216-361-3320	Largest classified ad database, national access	1994 24
Traveler's Connection	810-439-1509	Large message base, shareware, ads	1994 24
Info Service	920-205-0189	General BBS, messages, games, matchmaker	1994 24
Info Systems	703-749-2860	Since 1982, online games, games, matchmaker	1994 24
	314-667-4066	9 Gigs online, chat, messages, adult area	1994 24
		5.7 Gigs, 35,000 files, 100 online games, echos	1994 24
		Large shareware system, chat, Internet email	1994 24
		Internet 800 access, 10 Gigs online	1994 24
		games, Usenet, Internet, shareware	1994 24
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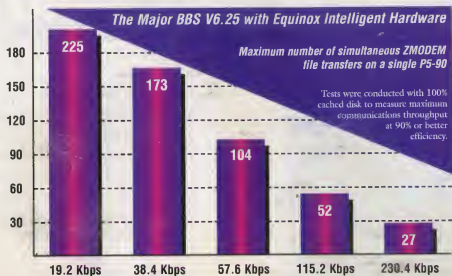
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